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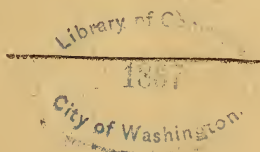
The Rev. Rowland Hill, M.A.

Rev. Hill

MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE, MINISTRY AND WRITINGS
OF
THE REV. ROWLAND HILL, M. A.

LATE MINISTER OF SURREY CHAPEL.

BY WILLIAM JONES, M. A.
AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF THE WALDENSES, BIBLICAL CYCLOPÆDIA, CHRISTIAN
BIOGRAPHY, ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, ETC



London :

PRINTED FOR JOHN BENNETT,
4, THREE TUN PASSAGE, IVY LANE, PATERNOSTER ROW.

1834.

BX 5207
H5J62

W. M. KNIGHT, PRINTER, ANGEL COURT,
SKINNER STREET.

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Sir

I have neither time nor eyesight
nor inclination to undertake the task
you have proposed to me not only because
others have undertaken a similar work but
it being my opinion that notes only tend to
encumber that beautiful drama while the
whole of it is so well calculated to illustrate
itself

I am Sir

Yours &c &c

Rowl^d Hill

Sunny Ch Tuesd eve

Ms. A. 17.036

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

TO THE

LIFE OF MR. HILL.

THE following sheets having been issued to the public periodically, and their publication having extended through a space of six or eight months, an opportunity has thereby been afforded of ascertaining a fact on which the compiler of the "Memoirs" felt not a little anxious at the outset, and on which he now uses the freedom of tendering a few prefatory observations.

When the application was first made to him to prepare the biographical part of the volume, he confesses that he was not a little staggered at the proposal. The dissimilarity of his own views and opinions to those which were entertained by Mr. Hill, particularly on the subject of civil establishments of the Christian Religion, or the right of the civil magistrate to interfere with the claims of the King of Zion, together with a variety of collateral topics, is so generally known that he not only hesitated for a moment, but thought it necessary to question the publisher, 'what kind of a life he expected?' whether it was to be a faithful portrait of the Original, according to the best judgment the present writer could form of him, or a *slap-dash* panegyric which should, in flaming colours, blazon his virtues and conceal his defects, or hide from the public view his numerous foibles: and that, if the latter was what he expected, he had applied to the wrong quarter. The reply was, "I shall impose no restraint upon you—but leave

you at liberty to say what you please of the subject of the Memoir; with this proviso, that you say nothing but what you believe to be true, and what you are prepared to defend, if called upon so to do."

With this mutual understanding he entered upon the task; and now his only remaining anxiety arose from a fear, lest a faithful exhibition of naked facts, should provoke the sycochancy of some and the bigotry of others, whose minds were so blinded by prejudice as to be incapable of listening to the voice of reason, and the more imperious demands of Revelation. The experiment, however, has been made, and the result has been most cheering. In a few instances, it cannot be denied, that the protest which has been entered against Mr. Hill's *latitudinarianism* has called forth an effusion of spleen and invective from persons who were incapable of putting two ideas together, and consequently whose praise or blame are of equal value, in the estimation of Mr. Hill's biographer*. Their impotent hostility to the publication has been more than counterbalanced by the patronage it has received

* Should the reader wish for a specimen of the delectable things referred to, he may obtain it by perusing a few pages in the "Evangelical Register" for last October. The reviewer evidently pens his remarks *feelingly* on the subject. In going over the pages of the Memoirs of Mr. Hill, he has not been able to divest his mind of a troublesome text of scripture, to wit, "Thus saying, thou reproachest us also!" But he is entitled to our sympathy: the poor man is so encumbered with his *black gowns* and *reverend companions*, to all of whom it is incumbent upon him to testify his obsequiousness, that he has no room in his conscience for a particle of reverence to the King of Zion. It seems never yet to have entered his imagination that the New Testament was intended by the God of Heaven to regulate the worship and obedience of Christ's disciples! Like Mr. Hill, he chooses to legislate for himself, for "Who is the LORD, that he should obey HIM?" The object of his idolatry is "Calvinistic Methodism," which we all know to be a very different thing from the Christianity of the New Testament. It were, perhaps, too much to expect from a writer of his stamp, that he should wholly abstain from calling *nicknames*, and throwing out false and calumnious insinuations, as in the application of the epithet "Sandeman," to the writer of the Life of Mr. Hill. If it proceed from sheer ignorance, he is to be *pitied*; if from malevolence, a different term would be required to characterise his conduct.

from the impartial and thinking portion of the religious public, among whom it has met with a most favourable reception. This is truly a matter of the purest satisfaction to the author of the Memoir, who, had the case been otherwise;—had he, by a fearless declaration of what he believes to be the truth, been accessary to the loss and injury of the Proprietor, he must have deeply deplored his temerity. Such an issue of the undertaking would have entailed upon him sensations and feelings, which the consciousness of its having resulted from a discharge of duty would have been insufficient to compensate. But, happily, for both the author and the publisher, their united efforts have been crowned with success; for while the former has been allowed to discharge the dictates of conscience in what he has written, it has been without detriment to his employer.

And now that I have thus far intruded myself upon the notice of the reader, I intreat his patience while I subjoin a few additional remarks on another topic.

Although upon a careful review of the biography of Mr. Hill, I find nothing in the way of comment, animadversion, or even censure on certain parts of his history, which I am disposed to retract, particularly his marked inconsistency in defending an establishment, whose multifarious corruptions and Antichristian abominations his own pen had so glaringly exposed on a variety of occasions; and his incessant endeavours to undermine the principles of Protestant Dissenters, and thus throw every thing relating to the worship and order of the Churches of Christ into confusion and anarchy: yet, I doubt whether I have made sufficient allowance for him, on the ground of the disadvantages attendant on his *education*, and the injury which he sustained in early life by the perversion of his principles, in consequence of his connection with ETON and CAMBRIDGE. He has not, it is true, left us without evidence, that he was aware of the prevalence of irreligion and immorality in these seminaries of learning; yet, it may be fairly questioned whether he himself was ever duly impressed

with a conviction of the demoralizing tendency of those sinks of iniquity. Within the last few weeks, a pamphlet has issued from the press, under the title of "*A Letter to His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, Chancellor, on the present corrupt state of the University of Cambridge*," by R. M. BEVERLEY, Esq., which has disclosed scenes of profligacy, irreligion, and vice, most appalling to every virtuous mind. Having, like Rowland Hill, passed through those renowned seats of learning, and spent several years in prosecuting his studies there, Mr. Beverley tells his Royal Highness what he has seen and knows to be true of them. As a fair sample of the whole, the reader may take the following extracts: and first as respects the College of Eton.

"It is lamentable to reflect," says Mr. Beverley, "on the education of the young gentlemen of England. They are generally sent to a public school, say ETON, *which is unquestionably the worst school in England*. There, for five years they learn a few fragments of the Greek and Latin authors, done up in selections, and which might by a scholar be easily read in a fortnight. They make a great many Latin verses, which an Eton boy soon acquires a habit of constructing with slovenly rapidity; and they learn by heart much Greek and Latin verse. Nothing useful in any way is taught them; they know nothing of history, nothing of any science, nothing of the great questions which are agitated in this age. A more ignorant creature could hardly be found, than a first-rate Eton boy. From this bad and immoral school they go to Cambridge, still worse and tenfold more immoral; and there they bring into play, the smatterings of the Greek and Latin which they had acquired at Eton, read a few more Greek tragedies or comedies, and being fully initiated into the fashionable "cram" of the University, obtain the prizes, and finally, perhaps, if the church be their destiny, the fellowships, and livings of the colleges. After which they grow large, read the Quarterly Review, and the Standard Newspaper, and die at last of the fat rot. These are the clerical gentlemen.

“As there is no attention paid at Cambridge to any instruction in the doctrines of Christianity, the effect of this scandalous omission is visible even among the evangelical clergy. Some of the serious clergy have in full manhood been converted from a life of previous debauchery, to a sense of their sinful lives, and so brought to deep repentance. They then for the first time begin to read the Scriptures, and are thus launched into the mighty ocean of Revelation, without any knowledge of the sea-marks, or any acquaintance with the constellations, to direct them in difficulties. The study of the Gospel, and an insight into [the nature of Christ's Kingdom, its laws, institutions, immunities, privileges, and blessings] is all a novelty to them. Every word of the mysteries of faith is as strange to their minds as if they had been Mahometans or Chineze Bonzes; for amongst the ordinary members of the Church of England what is known of the Gospel! As therefore they have never been instructed in any part of doctrinal theology, it is no wonder that they should, in many cases, run into dogmatical extravagances. We often hear such converts in the heat of their zeal declare, that they reject all books but the Bible, and that they will read it pure and sincere, without note or comment: they say they have no need of the old divines and expositors—their knowledge is spiritual; and no books can tell them that which they have received, not by the wisdom of man, but by express Revelation. They take a [distorted] view of every Evangelical [doctrinal] sentiment, and push every thing into extremes. We may remark this process amongst some of them; it is too often before our eyes; and the usual result is, that after a short time preaching the doctrines of the Gospel with fervent vivacity, they push on into the modern heresies, and are ultimately caught in the wild fanaticisms of the Irving School, or the thorny wilderness of Hyper-Calvinism. How many a promising clergyman has thus been lost to all that is useful! and how entirely this tendency to heresy is confined to the

members of either the Episcopal or Presbyterian establishments. Heresies thrive in establishments!

“The University of Cambridge produces half the religion of the kingdom, according to the notions of the Church of England, which acknowledges and knows no religion but her own. Cambridge is the ever-teeming fountain of Bishops Priests, and Deacons. The Masters of Colleges are frequently dignitaries of the Church; and two-thirds of all the Fellows of the Colleges are priests. Every College has its chapel and chapel-laws; the Undergraduates are compelled, generally speaking, to attend chapel eight times every week. Chapel-prayers are read every morning and evening. The services of Sundays, Saint-days, and Vigils, are celebrated in Cathedral liturgy, with chaunters, surplices, and all the paraphernalia of the British mass. On those occasions, all the Graduates and Undergraduates are dressed in surplices. The official characters of the University go in state every Sunday, Saint-day, and high festival, to St. Mary’s Church, and there is no lack of Sermons and Lectures. There are Professors of Divinity, Doctors of Divinity, Scribes and Pharisees, chief-priests and rulers of the synagogues in abundance; neither is there any want of Sadducees. Religion at Cambridge is entirely theatrical: every thing is done for show: all is pomp and ceremonies: white linen and scarlet robes, wax-candles, beadles, silver pokers, organs, anthems, and processions. If we inquire into the sects at Cambridge, we shall find, first, the Unbelievers (Infidels) no small body, but preserving all the exterior of State-religionists; the Sadducees, or Socinians who also strictly conform and despise the Thirty-nine Articles, the High-Church party, the most numerous of all: the Evangelicals, or serious Christians, commonly called the Simeonites; and the German School, minute in number, but respectable in talents, who have considerable reverence for the Pious superstitions, a smattering of Plato’s devotional paganism, a large infusion of Kant’s metaphysics, a little

mysticism, a little of the Persian adoration of the sun; and a good deal of Coleridge's depths of nonsense, transcendental and unintelligible.

"The general style of preaching, excepting always the sermons of the Evangelical party, is dry, profitless, dull, and Antichristian. The Gospel is quite unknown, and indeed is scarcely ever alluded to. They preach about virtue, and justification by good works, a little against enthusiasm, a good deal about subordination and the duty of being a Tory. They warn the hearers against 'the spirit of the age,' blow up the coals of Tophet for the Reform Bill and all its adherents; and exalt kings and governors, noblemen, bishops, and magistrates. There is, however, nothing like eloquence to recommend their bad doctrine; their Heathenism is too insipid to be palatable.

"Religion, however, at Cambridge, is not merely a crazy state-machine; it is a positive evil full of deadly poison. Nothing can be conceived worse than the system of *forcing* the Undergraduates to attend chapel and take the Sacrament. The evil effects of this forced and unnatural religion may easily be supposed. The mind is, in too many instances, set against attending any place of worship, and seeds of disgust to things which deserve the deepest reverence, are sown too deep, and take root too soon, to be easily eradicated. The Church of England is so accustomed to violence, she has so long dragooned men into her creed, and is so fond of soldiers and constables to support her power, that we cannot expect her to do otherwise when she is left to her own counsels. If she has played such pranks in greater matters, of course it will be but a mere trifle to drag the youth of England to her hated altars; but it is a matter of deep concern to see so detestable a system upheld as the excellency of wisdom; it is something which more than raises one's contempt, to behold troops of young profligates, compelled to join in the Lord's Supper, and 'eat and drink their own damnation.' I know that this has caused, and is causing, the deepest concern in

the minds of some Undergraduates, whose consciences are not yet seared with a hot iron ; and I also know that things are said and done at these forced celebrations of the Eucharist, which in reverence to the *spiritual* head of the church of true Christians, shall be buried in deep silence."

From these extracts the reader may form his estimate of the *Stygian Pool*, the turbid waters of which it was Mr. Hill's lot to sip in the days of his noviciate, and while qualifying for "Holy Orders :—" Let him keep the fact in view, while he peruses the following pages, and make the necessary allowance.

W. J.

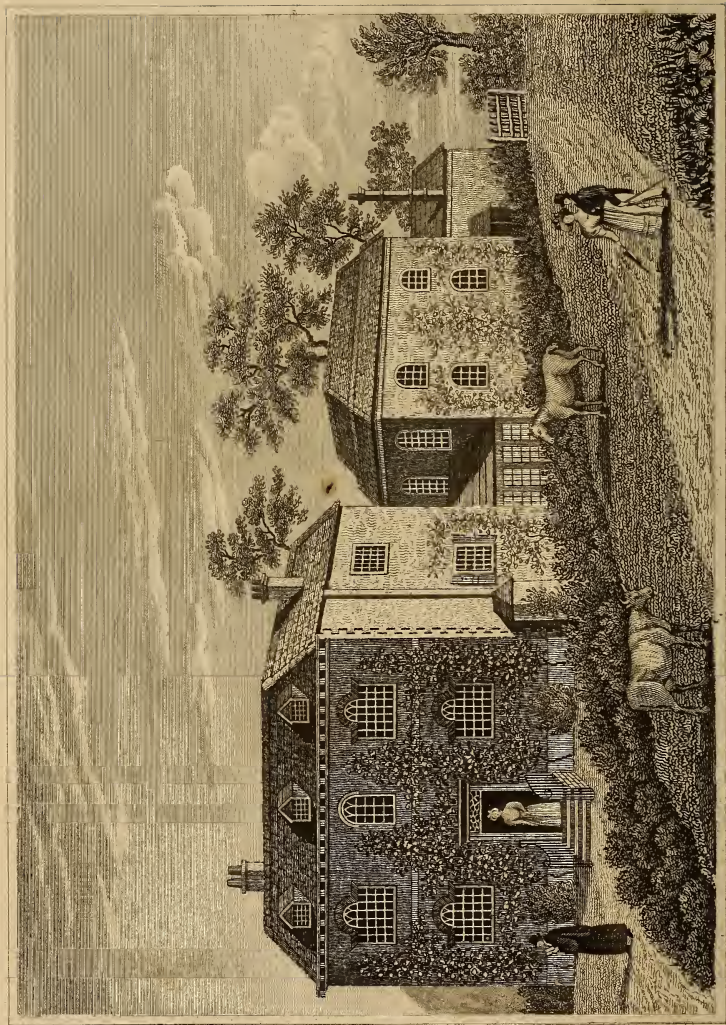
London, Dec. 10, 1833

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A VIEW OF THE RESIDENCE & CHAPEL OF THE REV ROWLAND HILL.

Wotton under edge Gloucestershire

MEMOIRS
OF THE
LIFE, MINISTRY, AND WRITINGS
OF THE
REV. ROWLAND HILL, M.A.

ROWLAND HILL, the late highly respected minister of Surrey Chapel, was, on various accounts, so deservedly popular, that the remembrance of him cannot hastily sink into oblivion. Posterity has an interest in the character of such a man; and the present generation owe it to them, to record with fidelity, such parts of his history as may minister to their instruction; the lessons "that may give ardour to virtue, and confidence to truth." When we take into account the stock from which he sprang—the talents with which he was gifted—the noble purposes to which he devoted them—the zeal, the ardour, the indefatigable labours in the ministry of the Gospel, which marked his career; and when to these we add the expansive benevolence of his heart, and the protracted date of his existence, we cannot but admit that Rowland Hill was an extraordinary individual. Of such a man the public will, doubtless, be furnished with a profusion of lives; some dictated by the

partiality of friendship, and others originating in less worthy motives. Relinquishing, however, to Mr. Jay the honour of exhibiting his venerable brother on the public stage, in the attitude of "the Cedar" of Lebanon, and calling on all the fir trees of the forest to pour out their lamentations over its fall*, it will be the humble object of the present Essay to sketch something like a faithful portrait of the man, such as we have seen and known him to be for more than half a century—unembellished with the fictions of poetry, and attired in the sober guise of truth. In doing which we shall—

" nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice."

Biography, in order to be useful, should not only be written with impartiality, it ought to be discriminating. Fallible mortals should not be exhibited in the attire of angels. There are spots in the sun; and some one has remarked that "none are perfect but the Arminians," to which class Mr. Hill never professed to belong. His eccentricities were numerous, and lamented even by himself. But, after all, we may say of him, as was said of another individual—"He was a man whose failings may be justly pardoned for his virtues."

* The text of Mr. Jay's funeral sermon was, Zech. xi. 2, "Howl, fir tree, for the cedar is fallen."

SECTION I.

MR. HILL'S FAMILY CONNECTIONS.

THE family from which the subject of this Memoir descended is of considerable antiquity, and has long been held in high estimation, both in public and private life. The first member of it who received the name of HILL, was Humphrey, son and heir of Geoffrey de HULLE, the name by which his ancestors were designated, and whose residence in the counties of Salop and York can be traced back to some time before the reign of Edward the First, A. D. 1272, at which period they became distinguished among the gentlemen of the north. From the marriage of Humphrey Hill with a daughter of John Bridde, Esq., maternally descended from the ancient earls of Chester, sprang several branches, which were dispersed into different parts of the kingdom. One of the younger sons of this prolific marriage was father to Sir *Rowland* Hill, the first who bore the Christian name of the subject of this Memoir. He is still more remarkable as having been the first Protestant Lord Mayor of London, an office which he filled twice; first in the reign of Henry VIII., by whom he was knighted; and afterwards during the short reign of his son, Edward VI.

Of this venerable progenitor of the HILL family, it is gratifying to be enabled to record, that he was a man eminently distinguished for the exercise of benevolence, nor less so for public spirit and philanthropy. Possessed of immense wealth, he devoted a large portion of it to the founding of several public charities, particularly the churches of Stoke and Hodnet, and the schools of Drayton, in Shropshire. To his munificence, also, the public are indebted for the large stone

bridges over the Severn and Tern, near Atcham; and for several public roads, and works of considerable benefit and utility, in different parts of that populous neighbourhood. His descendants had no reason to complain of their allotments in his will, notwithstanding a large portion of his property was bequeathed to public institutions, among which Christ's Hospital was munificently remembered.

During the civil wars, the loyalty of this family and its adherence to the cause of Charles I. exposed it to much suffering; but no member of it, after Sir Rowland, became remarkably prominent in public life, till the Right Hon. Richard Hill, second son of Rowland Hill, who then resided at the mansion at Hawkstone, was deputed by William III. to the embassy at Brussels, and appointed paymaster to the British army in Flanders. At the close of his diplomatic life, having been sent on several embassies by Queen Anne, this able and upright statesman became a Lord of the Treasury, one of the council of his Royal Highness Prince George of Denmark, in his office as Lord High Admiral, and a member of her Majesty's Privy Council. He survived his royal mistress several years, was personally known to George I., who highly esteemed him, and in token of that esteem, conferred the dignity of baronet upon his nephew and heir at law, Rowland Hill, an honour which he begged to decline for himself. The nephew now mentioned became member of parliament for Lichfield, which city he represented in several sessions; and was the father of five sons, namely, the late Sir Richard Hill, M.P., the late Sir John Hill, father of the present Lord Hill, commander of his Majesty's forces, and of the Reverend Rowland Hill, M.A. the late minister of Surrey Chapel, with two other brothers, viz. Brian and Robert, both clergymen of the church of England*.

* The compiler of the Georgian Era, Vol. I., article "Rowland Hill," has fallen into several palpable inaccuracies on this subject, which it is important to rectify: thus he begins: "Rowland, son of the late Sir

SIR RICHARD HILL, Bart., the elder brother of the subject of this Memoir, was, in many respects, a congenial spirit with the latter; and their history is so interwoven, that we shall have frequent occasion to mention him hereafter: for which reason it will be desirable to introduce a brief account of him in this place. He was born at Hawkstone, near Shrewsbury, in the year 1733, consequently was eleven years older than Rowland. He received his education at Westminster school, from whence he removed to Magdalen College, Oxford, where he graduated as Master of Arts. He then made the tour of Europe, in company with the late Earl of Elgin, and on his return home found the celebrated George Whitefield in possession of the public mind. His pious Alma Mater, justly alarmed at the popularity of this field preacher, and at the inroads which he was making on University Statutes and the established order of things, had thought proper, in her great wisdom, to expel six of her sons, viz. James Matthews, Thomas Jones, Joseph Shipman, Benjamin Kay, Erasmus Middleton, and Thomas Grove, for acting contrary to statute rule, such as frequenting conventicles, praying without the use of the book of Common Prayer, holding what are termed evangelical sentiments, and preaching to a mixed multitude of people in unconsecrated places. Mr. Hill volunteered a defence of these young men, in a pamphlet which he published in the year 1768, entitled "*Pietas Oxoniensis*," the demand for which was so great that a second edition was called for in the course of a few months, when it appeared "revised, corrected, and greatly enlarged,"

Richard, and brother to General Lord Hill, was born about the year 1748." Here are three errors in as many lines. Rowland Hill was not the son, but the brother of the late Sir Richard. He was the uncle, and not the brother, of the present Lord Hill. He was born in 1744, and not in 1748. The editor then goes on to state, that he was expelled from the University of Oxford, for preaching in unauthorized places. This is again incorrect: Rowland could not be expelled from Oxford, for this obvious reason, that he was not educated there, but at Cambridge. And finally, his wife's maiden name was not *Gudway*, but *Tudway*.

with not a few "extraordinary anecdotes," illustrative of the composition and proceedings of the University of Oxford.

The Monthly Reviewers, speaking of this pamphlet, thought proper to say, "This is a well digested and specious defence of the students. We look upon it to be a pamphlet of such dangerous tendency that it ought to be fully answered and refuted by the gentlemen of Oxford, who are so freely attacked in it. We have not lately met with so able a vindication of orthodoxy and modern fanaticism; and we cannot but apprehend, that if its contents are not properly exposed and refuted, such a performance may impose on and mislead many an unwary reader. The progress of Methodism among us is now become so considerable, that it seems to be high time for rational religion and common sense to keep a good watch, and defend themselves against its encroachments, lest we be again overwhelmed by an inundation of pious barbarism worse than that of those spiritual Goths and Vandals, the Monks*."

On this Mr. Hill thus shrewdly remarks: "Permit me, gentlemen, to observe that the great compliment you are so kind as to pay me on the ability of my performance, was as much unexpected as your declarations of its 'dangerous tendency' were apprehended. To tell you the truth, I always suspected you of a sly affection for infidelity, and consequently no small hatred for orthodoxy; but now you have spoken out, and put the matter beyond suspicion; for, by ranking orthodoxy with fanaticism, you have given us a plain intimation what you mean by 'rational religion and common sense,' viz. heterodoxy and infidelity, for certainly these two must ever stand in opposition to orthodoxy, and there is no despising this without being an advocate for those. But, gentlemen, why do you call the doctrine contained in '*Pietas Oxoniensis*' *modern fanaticism*? If it be fanaticism at all, I am sure it is ancient fanaticism and Reformation fanaticism, yea, authorized and established fanaticism too, seeing the whole of this fanaticism

* Monthly Review, for June, 1768.

is extracted from the Articles, Homilies, Liturgy, and other offices of the Church of England; so that I have at least the comfort of being a fanatic with some of the best and greatest men that ever lived, viz. our first Reformers; whilst Messieurs the Reviewers, by calling the quotations I have made from their compositions ‘pious barbarism, worse than that of those spiritual Goths and Vandals, the Monks,’ have evidently brought the matter to this issue—that Popery and Monkish superstition are greatly to be preferred to Protestantism, and that the Orthodoxy, Methodism, and Fanaticism, which rational religion and common sense ought to keep a good watch against, are in truth and reality the pure scriptural doctrines of the Reformation, and of the Church of England*.”

The “*Pietas Oxoniensis*” obtained an answer from Dr. Nowell, the public orator of the University, upon whom his antagonist retorted with considerable asperity. Soon after this he engaged warmly in defending the doctrines of Sovereign Grace and the Calvinism of the Church of England against Messrs. John Wesley, Fletcher of Madely, and others of the Arminian school. He wrote a pamphlet entitled “*Christianity the true Religion, in answer to the blasphemy of a Deist,*” 1775. When the Rev. Martin Madan’s work on Polygamy appeared, Mr. Hill published, *An Affectionate Address to that author, entitled “The Blessings of Polygamy displayed,”* 1781. Also, “*An Apology for Brotherly Love, and for the doctrines of the Church of England,*” 1798. “*Daubenism Confuted, and Martin Luther Vindicated,*” 1800. “*Remarks on one of the Charges of the Bishop of Lincoln,*” 1804. On the death of his father, he succeeded him in the representation of the county of Salop, and was a frequent speaker in the House of Commons, voting generally in concurrence with Messrs. Wilberforce, Thornton, and their friends. In private life he bore an irreproachable character: his charities were

* Letter to the Monthly Reviewers.

extensive, and administered with tenderness and secrecy. He died unmarried in 1808, when his title passed to his brother Sir John Hill, father of the present Commander of his Majesty's Forces.

Of Sir John Hill's life we find no materials for the biographer. He appears to have lived as a private and retired gentleman. His lady was the daughter and co-heiress of John Chambre, Esq., by whom he had two sons, of which the present LORD R. HILL was the second. He was born at Hawkstone, in the year 1772, and received his education at Rugby school. He entered the army at an early period of life, and was rapidly advanced, for his numerous and important services, to the rank of Major General, and in the several stages of his advancement, not only gained the approbation of the various commanders under whom he served in successive campaigns, but also endeared himself to the junior officers and men, to whose accommodation he was always particularly attentive. But to trace this distinguished officer in his military career, from the memorable battle of Alexandria, in the year 1801, to the termination of the great struggle in that of Waterloo, A.D. 1814, would require a volume, and therefore cannot be entered on in this place. In the History of the Peninsular War the name and fame of Lord Hill must ever hold a conspicuous place. On more occasions than one, the thanks of a grateful country were voted him through the medium of parliament, in conjunction with Lord Wellington and other British heroes; and on one occasion, his name was thought worthy of being introduced into the speech at the opening of parliament, in the following manner: "The successful and brilliant enterprise, which ended in the surprise, in Spanish Estremadura, of a French corps, by a detachment of the allied army under Lieutenant General Hill, is highly creditable to that distinguished officer, and the troops under his command, and has contributed materially to obstruct the designs of the enemy in that part of the Peninsula."

The unanimous thanks of both houses of parliament were

voted to him “for the valour, steadiness, and exertion so successfully displayed by him, in repelling repeated attacks made on the positions of the allied army, by the whole French force under Marshal Soult, between the 25th of July and the 3d of August, 1813.” Soon after this he received the freedom of the city of London, with a valuable sword, as a testimony of respect for his long and meritorious services. And this honour had scarcely been paid him, when the Prince Regent (afterwards George the Fourth) was pleased to advance him to the dignity of the peerage, by the title of Baron Hill, of Almaraz, in Portugal, and of Hawkstone, in England: at the same time, parliament, to enable him to support the dignity, voted an annuity of two thousand pounds, which is also to be enjoyed by two successors in the barony.

Of his Lordship’s conduct on various other occasions, and particularly in the battle of Waterloo, we forbear to speak. The time is not come to enter with propriety on such a discussion—posterity will do him justice. Let it suffice in this place to record that, when his Grace the Duke of Wellington, at the command of his Sovereign, took office as First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Hill, by the preference of that Sovereign, was placed at the head of the army, as COMMANDER OF THE FORCES. We now turn our attention to his venerable uncle the late Minister of Surrey Chapel.

SECTION II.

MR. HILL’S BIRTH, EDUCATION, AND ENTRANCE ON THE MINISTRY.

ROWLAND HILL, the subject of this Memoir, was born at Hawkstone, in Shropshire, on the 23d of August, 1744. The Royal Free Grammar School of Shrewsbury, founded by Edward VI., has long maintained an honourable distinction among the seminaries of learning in our favoured land—a dis-

tion which so far from being diminished, as in many other instances, has of late been carried to an enviable pitch, under the fostering care of the learned Dr. Butler. In this school Mr. Hill obtained the first rudiments of his education. He was then removed to Eton, where he spent some years in cultivating the higher branches of education, preparatory to his going to Cambridge to finish his studies. It was during his residence at Eton that the character of Rowland Hill began to germinate and expand itself. Here he was brought into collision with many of the sons of our nobility, and by intercourse with them was led to imbibe that propensity to wit, which in the subsequent periods of life so much enlivened his conversation. We are told that, when a youth, he could frown at folly and reprove vice, without the indulgence of intemperate anger towards those that were guilty of them. These qualities, combined with a vivacity of manner and an archness of countenance, soon enabled him to surmount the embarrassment of an Etonian initiation, and to acquire the confidence and esteem of such of both tutors and students whose esteem and confidence were worth cultivating. It would appear from what Mr. Jay states, in the sermon which he delivered at the time of his interment, April 19th, 1833, that an important change had taken place in Mr. Hill's views of divine truth during the time he was a student at Eton, and that this was effected (under God) by means of one of Beveridge's sermons, read to him by his brother, Richard Hill, from these words, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." That his brother considered him at this time brought to the saving knowledge of the truth, is manifest from a letter which he addressed to him, while at Eton, and which is so creditable to both the brothers, that I shall make no scruple to lay it entire before the reader. The single prefatory remark that we shall offer is to remind him that at the time the letter was written, Mr. Rowland Hill was only eighteen years of age, and his brother Richard, the writer of the letter, eleven years older.

London, Feb. 22d, 1762.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,

Though I have been in town upwards of three weeks, yet I have hitherto deferred writing, that I might let you know when the works of Archbishop Leighton, which you desired Archer to buy for you, were to be at Eton, where you may expect to have them by the next machine, directed for you at Eton, carriage paid. The reason they could not be got sooner was owing to their being almost out of print. May you, by the grace of God, be enabled to relish, digest, and practise the divine truths contained in the writings of this excellent prelate, than whom the Church of England never had a brighter ornament. But what I particularly admire in this Archbishop is, that spirit of patience and resignation to the divine will, under every dispensation, which breathes throughout all his compositions, and plainly discovers itself to have been the habitual temper of his renewed heart—a temper which is the life and soul of Christianity, and what can alone bring true peace and comfort to the mind of the believer. But, then, how is this disposition to be obtained, since false presumption is often mistaken for peace of conscience, and a stupid apathy and insensibility may make a person think he has attained a true gospel resignation, when in reality he knows not what it means. If we may believe the Scriptures, it is faith which brings peace and resignation to the soul. “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” And again, “Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee.” The conscience being first awakened by the Holy Spirit, to see its own defilement, and afterwards pacified by an application of the blood of sprinkling, attains a sweet composure, and resting upon the faithfulness of the Redeemer, and the all-sufficiency of his undertaking, is assured that “all things shall work together for good, to those who love God, and are called according to his purpose.”

This consideration makes it the desire of the Christian’s

heart, that the will of God may be done in him and by him, and therefore, under the most distressing circumstances, or sharpest sufferings, he can say, "Lord, thou knowest what is good for me, better than I do for myself; therefore not my will but thine be done." Moreover, the soul, thus brought out of darkness, into the marvellous light of the Gospel, sees an amiableness and excellency in Christ Jesus, which before he knew nothing of. Once he could look upon the blessed Redeemer as having "no form nor comeliness in him, that he should desire him;" but now he sees him to be "altogether lovely, the chief among ten thousand, full of grace and truth."

Having now obtained the precious faith of God's elect, Jesus is become precious to his soul, "for to them that believe he is precious," says St. Peter. Time was when this poor perishing world, and its riches, honours, and pleasures ran away with his affections; but the bent of his heart being now changed, he pants only after "the unsearchable riches of Christ."—the honour which cometh from God, and those pleasures which are "at his right hand for evermore." Time was when his own will was his rule, and the commandments, ordinances, and people of God, were all irksome to him; but now, "being born from above, and passed from death unto life," it is the desire of his heart to be guided by the word and Spirit of God—he accounts his commandments no longer grievous, but a light and easy yoke. He says of the ordinances, "It is good for me to be here," and his delight is in the saints of the earth, and all such as excel in virtue.

These things, my dear brother, I am well assured, you know by happy experience; and most certain it is, that "flesh and blood hath not revealed them unto you; for the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Human nature can rise no higher than its own source, which is "earthly, sensual devilish." "but the anointing which

you have received of the Holy One abideth in you, and he shall lead you into all truth." "Nature," says good bishop Cowper, "is stark blind to the things of grace, since these can only be apprehended by divine illumination, nor can be taught by any other teacher than the Spirit of God." But though it has pleased the Lord to show you, in some measure, the mysteries of his kingdom, yet remember that you are but "a babe in Christ, and know but in part." Therefore, be frequent and earnest in prayer for fresh supplies of knowledge, faith, grace, and strength; and you have all possible encouragements to be so, since "in Christ all fulness dwells, and out of that fulness we receive grace for grace."

Learn then to guard against self-dependence, and to live more upon Christ. See that he be made unto you wisdom and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption. Resign yourself to Him in all his offices, as a Prophet, Priest, and King—a Prophet to teach you, a Priest to make atonement for you, a King to reign over you, and in you. View him in his pastoral office, in the character of the good Shepherd, "the Shepherd that gave his life for his sheep." Consider his watchfulness and tender care for his dear chosen flock—that "little flock, to whom it is his good pleasure to give the kingdom," having redeemed them by his blood, "out of every tongue, and kindred, and people;" having promised them eternal life, and "betrothed them unto himself in faithfulness, that they might never perish, and none pluck them out of his hands."

Consider, my dear brother, how that, when you as a poor helpless sheep, were gone astray, this dear shepherd sought you and brought you back. Remember how, when wandering further and further from his fold, he made you hear his voice and follow him, "carrying you as a lamb in his bosom, and gently leading you whilst you were yet young." O think of this "love which passeth knowledge," and may it fill your heart with praise, and your tongue with thanksgiving. Let it constrain you to live to HIM who died for you, and to grow

daily more and more in conformity to his blessed image, that so you may “adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, and by well doing, put to silence the ignorance of foolish men, who would falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.”

But, remember, that it is not sufficient that you set yourself against outward sins; you must be watchful against heart sins—those sins that are most woven in you by nature and constitution. Therefore, try and examine yourself what manner of spirit you are of. Take the Psalmist’s advice, “Commune with your own heart, and in your chamber, and be still.” Fear not to know the worst of your case at all times, since this is the only way to mend it, whilst self-ignorance and self-conceit have shipwrecked their thousands. Let pride, peevishness, and self-will be brought forth, lamented, mortified; and instead of these, seek to put on all the tempers and dispositions of the meek and lowly Jesus, with all the sweet and lovely graces of his Spirit. Bear patiently with the perverseness and oddities of those who are under the dominion of fallen nature, and therefore objects of pity, not of revenge. Condescend to the lowest offices for the lowest people, when you can thereby render the best service, either to their souls or bodies. “Become all things to all men,” as far as you can consistently with your holy profession; yet take care that you abuse not your liberty for a cloak to sin; for sin, in the least degree allowed, or consented to, will damp your comfort, deaden your graces, and hinder your progress in the divine life. See, then, that you be watchful against the first risings of sin; dally not with so dangerous an enemy. And though it will plead hard to be spared, give it no quarter, but “clothe yourself with the whole armour of God,” and fight like a true Christian soldier, in the strength, and under the banners of the great Captain of your Salvation, till “Satan be bruised under your feet, and death be swallowed up in victory.”

I shall add one word more, and I have done. Be diligent

in your studies. However human learning may prove a snare to such as are "vainly puffed up in their fleshy minds," yet in a gracious heart it is very desirable. And, if it be your prayer and endeavour that whatsoever attainments you make in profane literature, may be subservient to the nobler end of rendering you instrumental to the good of souls, and useful to the church of Christ; there is no fear of your being hurt by those detestable maxims and principles, with which the most admired classical authors abound; but they will rather be the means of discovering to you the blindness and depravity of human nature, and the necessity of seeking the only true wisdom "that cometh from above," and without which all other wisdom will prove, in the end, to be only refined folly.

And now, with my sincere prayers, that, if it be the will of God ever to call you to the work of the ministry, you may be fitted and prepared by his Grace and Holy Spirit, for that most important office; and by your steady attachment to our most excellent church, in a season wherein there is so dreadful a departure from the doctrine of her homilies, articles, and common prayer, may prove yourself a faithful labourer in the vineyard of our blessed Lord, I conclude myself,

Your most affectionate brother,

Both by grace and nature,

RICHARD HILL.

P. S. Pray remember me in love to our dear brother, to whom you may either read or show this letter, which I desire you will keep, as I hope it may hereafter, as well as at present, be of some use to you.

Mr. Rowland Hill religiously complied with his brother's request in the postscript to this letter; he carefully preserved it, and in transmitting it for insertion to the Editor of the Evangelical Magazine more than thirty years afterwards, he accompanied it with a short note, in which he said, "the enclosed was written to me by my brother, Sir Richard, when I was first called to the knowledge of the truth, being at that

time a boy at Eton School. He was then himself but young in the divine life. Perhaps what was a blessing to *me*, may likewise be profitable to some young persons among your readers, in similar circumstances."

Before we dismiss this letter, it may be permitted the present writer to say that he subscribes to the judgment passed upon it by a friend who, in referring to it, thus remarks: "This valuable epistle merits special notice, both on the writer's account as well as his brother's, to whom it was addressed. It exhibits the creed of Sir Richard Hill, not only in its earliest, but in its best and purest state. Seldom can it be said, that the first opinions of a Christian convert are purer and better than those which he is afterwards and ultimately led to form. The experience of years, and the intercourse of manhood and age with the intelligent of the church, and the excellent of the earth, often give an accuracy as well as a soundness to his doctrinal system, which it wanted in the earlier stages of his religious course." The effect of this letter accorded with its scriptural character. Rowland Hill is said to have formed a just estimate of its value, and thought more highly of it than of all the subsequent productions of his brother's pen. Nor can we wonder at this. Sir Richard, as he advanced in manhood, is well known to have drank into the system of Ultra Calvinism, and to have imbibed a predilection for discussing "the deep things of God," into which he was probably drawn by his partiality for the writings of Toplady and others of that school, no less than by his dislike of the Arminianism of Wesley and Fletcher. Though from the first of his setting out, Rowland was a decided Calvinist, yet he did not follow his brother in "his march of sentiment;" or, if in the warmth of a youthful profession, and the heat of polemical contest, he incautiously imbibed his brother's creed for a while, he had the wisdom to retrace his steps, and as will hereafter very satisfactorily appear from his published pieces, he preserved a happy consistency between the two extremes of high and low—of supralapsarianism on the one hand, and of

Arminianism on the other; the Scylla and Charybdis of the present day.

Mr. Hill remained at Eton about four years, whence he was removed to Cambridge, and entered St. John's College, when little more than eighteen years of age. Here he found a fellow collegian, of a somewhat kindred spirit; one to whom he could unbosom himself, and with whom he could take sweet counsel on every emergency. This was the late David Simpson, of Macclesfield, author of the well-known "Plea for Religion, and the Sacred Writings." There were many points of resemblance between these two friends. They were men of the same cast of character, fashioned after the same pattern, and for the same purposes. Their habits of thinking, and some of their modes of expression, were remarkably alike. As pulpit orators, indeed, the resemblance failed. Mr. Simpson never possessed Mr. Hill's strength of voice and power of utterance; besides which he was shackled more with ecclesiastical trammels, he was more of the Church of England Clergyman, and consequently restrained from that freedom of manner and familiarity of illustration in which Mr. Hill always delighted to indulge. It has been doubted, whether at any period of his life, but especially during his residence at Cambridge, Mr. Simpson imbibed so full a share of Calvinistic sentiment and feeling as Mr. Hill did. But in all the essential features of the Christian character the resemblance was striking. They both possessed an intrepidity and independence of spirit which little brooked restraint, and rendered their attachment to the Church of England of comparatively little force when opportunities of greater usefulness beyond its pale presented themselves, and they were likely to do more good by breaking than by observing canonical rules.

While prosecuting his studies at Cambridge, Mr. Hill also formed an acquaintance with the late Mr. Robinson, of Leicester, and the present Mr. Charles Simeon, of Cambridge. Being of the same college with the latter, it was their custom to read the Greek Testament together, and to join in prayer for the

blessing of heaven on their studies. Mr. Hill, at a subsequent period of life, thus delivered his opinion of the University. "During my residence at this seat of learning, even drunkenness and whoredom were deemed less exceptionable practices in a candidate for the ministry, than visiting the sick and imprisoned, and expounding the Scriptures in private houses. For these last mentioned offences, I met with no less than *six refusals* before I gained admission into the ministry of the established church*." Concerning Mr. Simpson, in particular, Mr. Hill adds, "Our acquaintance commenced at Cambridge. Being of the same college, our custom was to read with each other the Greek Testament, and other evangelical publications; these meetings we always concluded with prayer. The University then was almost in total darkness. No wonder, therefore, if, for such exercises, and for some other strong symptoms of a *Methodistical bias*, we were speedily marked, and had the honour of being pointed at as the curiosities of the day. This did good. Others soon joined us, to the number of ten or twelve. Some of them were *Nicodemian disciples*; others have proved bold and useful ministers; and some of them, I trust, have been taken to glory."

At the time that Mr. Hill was prosecuting his studies at Eton and Cambridge, the celebrated George Whitefield was in the zenith of his popularity, if he may not rather be said to have commenced his retrocession. His advocates and adversaries were contending about him with the greatest zeal. Into this contest Mr. Hill entered warmly, and sided himself as a champion for Whitefield. He read all that issued from the press on either side of the question, and acquainted himself fully with the facts of Mr. Whitefield's character and career, as well as the principles on which they were formed and governed. The writings of Henry, Doddridge, and Hervey, became now the favourite object of his theological studies, and he made

* Journal of a Tour to Scotland, p. 45.

himself master of them, which tended much to the establishment of his mind in that system of doctrines by which his own ministry was subsequently regulated. Before he attained the proper age of entering into what is called "holy orders," he had preached in the prison, and in private houses also in Cambridge, as well as in the chapel and tabernacle of Mr. Whitefield, in London. This latter was a bold step, and blamed by many of his friends, for it at once identified him with the cause of Calvinistic methodism. To Mr. Whitefield's society it was, without doubt, a cause of exultation; the accession of a person of Mr. Hill's family connection, talents, and character, and, moreover, one whose example was likely to be so influential, was hailed with triumph. The son of a baronet, and a Cambridge student, was likely to give consequence to this rising community, and appeared as the first fruits of an abundant harvest. Some of Mr. Hill's warmest friends, however, viewed this subject in a different light: they thought him much too precipitate, and called his methodism very immethodical. Mr. Toplady, in particular, who held him in great estimation, now began to show both alarm and displeasure; the latter, that he had so early and so openly sanctioned the principle of dissent from the national establishment; and alarm, lest his eccentric spirit should lead him to a departure from its articles and homilies, as well as its discipline and rules. His own family, too, especially his father, deeply regretted this signal mark of indifference to the establishment, which might soon strengthen into defiance of its power, and renunciation of its principles. That the headstrong and heedless zealot, as they called him, was not cut off as a hopeless branch, and left to take root and flourish where he could, or wither through want of stability and support, is ascribed to the influence and intercession of his brother Richard, whose devoted attachment to Rowland, and whose hopes of his final and flourishing success as a preacher of the everlasting gospel, no deviation from canonical rules, had any power to abate, while he saw him every day becoming more rooted and grounded in the principles of Christianity.

Previous to his quitting the University, Mr. Hill took the degree of Master of Arts, with some degree of *eclat*; but the general knowledge of the fact, that he had occasionally preached at the Tabernacle and Tottenham-court-road chapel certainly threw impediments in the way of his obtaining ordination. The compiler of the Georgian Era, however, must be wrong in attributing this to his having rendered himself conspicuous as “a field-preacher,” for there is no proof on record that he had ever “gone forth into the high ways and hedges,” prior to his ordination. It is related that, on his receiving a remonstrance for his partial secession from the church, in which, on account of his family influence, he was sure to have preferment, he replied, “My desire is to win souls, not livings; and if I can secure the bees, I care not who gets the hives;” an anecdote which is very likely to be true, for it is exceedingly characteristic of the man. The obstacles, nevertheless, were in time removed; he obtained a title to orders, and was ordained Deacon of the establishment, by Dr. Moss, then Bishop of Bath and Wells. He seems to have possessed sufficient ambition to prompt him to the wish of rising at least one step higher on the clerical ladder, by being ordained a priest (or presbyter), as Whitefield and Wesley had been before him; but in that he could never succeed; which led him frequently, in after life, to jest upon the subject, and say, “he had but one boot, with which to travel the journey of life.”

Whitefield died, A.D. 1770, and an opinion generally prevailed that his mantle had fallen on Rowland Hill. It was said that the latter strove to convert this opinion into fact, by endeavouring to place himself in the vacant seat of the departed prophet, and henceforth hold the crook of supreme pastoral authority over the flock, whom the death of that eminent man had left without a shepherd. It is, perhaps, impossible to prove either the truth or the falsehood of this charge; yet it appears sufficiently improbable and unreasonable to lead every candid mind to doubt its correctness. At all events, if any such effort was made, no one acquainted with Mr. Hill could ascribe it to

improper motives, or suppose it to have been made in an improper manner. At this early period, as well as ever afterwards, he evinced a mind quite superior to all sordid or ambitious motives.

Mr. Hill made his first appearance as an author, in the year 1776, in a funeral discourse, entitled, "A Token of Respect, to the Memory of the late Rev. James Rouquet; being the substance of a Sermon, preached in the parish church of St. Werburgh, in the city of Bristol, on Sunday, November 24th, 1776, by Rowland Hill, A.M. *Chaplain to the Countess of Chesterfield*. Every page of this production affords proof of the writer's fervent regard to the memory of the deceased, who appears to have been Mr. Hill's second self, an indefatigable labourer in the Lord's vineyard, preaching for many years of his life seldom less than seven times in the week.

Mr. Rouquet was a descendant of a family of French refugees who fled from France to England, for the sake of enjoying the inestimable blessings of civil and religious liberty, probably at the time of the revocation of the edict of Nantz. As Mr. Hill's testimony is most honourable to his christian character, and especially as the printed Sermon has long since disappeared from public view, the reader will not be displeased at meeting with a short extract from it in this place.

"As I had the honour of a very intimate acquaintance with him, ever since I have known this city, I am happy that I have it not only in my power thus to declare the excellencies of his public character; but can bear witness to his truly Christian deportment in private life. As a husband, his most amiable widow sustains a loss that no words can reach. Those silken cords both of nature and grace, were so twined around their hearts, and had made them so completely one in all they said or did, that if ever twain were really seen to be one flesh, it might have been seen in them. As a father, his children were not driven but led; not alarmed, but allured into obedience. Though he was fully sensible that it highly became a minister of Christ to govern well his own house, yet he wisely judged,

government was much better kept up by the persuasive influences of love, than the rod of iron. His servants will next bear me witness to the loss they sustain in a master, that ever behaved to them with the tenderness of a father. The well known and deserved hatred he ever bore to the *horrid* principles of political tyranny abroad, which entirely arose from the generosity of his heart, would never permit him to act as a petty tyrant at home. As a merciful man he would have been ashamed to have used cruelty to a dog. He beheld his servants as his fellow-creatures, and knew that they had as much right to happiness as himself. Disdainful looks, proud, snappish, severe speeches, which some can make use of upon every supposed offence, were never seen or heard from him. Hence none of those changes appeared among his servants, which so sadly disgrace the families of many. As a friend, from a very intimate acquaintance with him, give me leave to bear my testimony, that one more constant and sincere I never found: to have equalled him would have been difficult, to have excelled him impossible. From the best of motives, he was of a more generous turn than to love in prosperity alone; in adversity he was the same, his conduct was invariable throughout. It frequently also happens, that the method in which kind actions are performed, adds a double lustre to the action itself, and in this respect our dear friend was peculiarly happy. His free and affable disposition would never permit him to disgrace the cause of God by a sullen moroseness, too much adopted by some. That heavenly cheerfulness which true grace must ever inspire, united to the natural sweetness of his temper, gave him an opportunity to prove that it never was the end of the gospel of Christ to make men melancholy and severe.

“ But amidst all these amiable endowments, is it to be wondered at, since ‘there is not a just man upon the earth that liveth and sinneth not,’ if one hears a distant hint, as if, now and then, my dear-loved friend might have been supposed to have made somewhat of a small elopement from that cheerfulness which is truly Christian, towards a disposition too much bor-

dering upon a turn of pleasantry, which might have needed a little more the spirit of solemnity? With the greatest delicacy I drop the hint, and am glad to cover it with the mantle of love, by *lamenting before you all, the same weakness in myself!* A lively, active disposition is too apt to lead into this mistake: in many things we offend all; it is alone because ‘the Lord’s compassions fail not, that the best of the sons of men are not consumed.’

“As a minister he was thoroughly disinterested. The dirty motives of filthy lucre were by no means the springs that actuated his labours in this department of his life; he was above the thought of considering how much he was paid for, and meanly making that the limits of his work. As he knew that from his master above he had *freely received*, so he thought it his honour *freely to give*. And if his upright and enlarged heart might now and then have constrained him to go beyond the bounds of a human establishment (however good in its place), ’tis no wonder to find the contracted bigot despise him for his catholicism. But however despised by them, his memory, by the candid Christian, shall be deservedly respected. And did we all but more duly consider that we hasten as fast as time can carry us to that judgment seat where all these shadows shall be eternally forgotten, we should be more apt to respect that man as the wisest who contends most earnestly for the substance of religion.”

Every candid reader will be ready to admit that this is a very honourable testimony to Mr. Rouquet’s character, and in the manner of saying it he will no less appreciate that of Mr. Hill. The latter, it seems, was at his bed-side when he breathed his last; prayed with him and for him when in the agonies of death; witnessed the supports which the Gospel afforded him as he walked through the valley of the shadow of death; and saw him sweetly fall asleep in Jesus. His funeral was attended by a large concourse of people, who felt and feelingly lamented the loss they had sustained, and wept aloud at his grave. On this affecting scene, Mr. Hill remarks as follows:

“But perhaps some secret objector might wish to urge, if shame did not prevent, that scarce any but the poor attended him with these honours to the grave. True, my friend, it is most cheerfully granted; and they are the people whose simple and undisguised ideas will give you the most faithful portrait of the upright man’s character. The sordid motives of interest and ambition are those which principally sway the rich. *I speak this to their shame!* Gladly, therefore, do I admit the charge, my brother Rouquet was highly honoured, for he was honoured by the poor: and when most of our heads are laid low in the grave, his memory shall still be revered, while those that live only to themselves, however esteemed among the great and noble in this world, shall soon be forgotten, as a dead man out of sight, for ‘the memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.’”

Here I should have taken leave of this interesting sermon, were it not that the singularity of the Dedication tempts me to lay it before the reader as affording a happy illustration of one feature in Mr. Hill’s own character, viz. his condescension to men of low estate.

“TO THE POOR.

“Fulsome and flattering dedications to the rich are frequent enough: let me, however, for once, be permitted to deviate from the common path, and dedicate this token of respect to the memory of my dear-loved friend, to the use and benefit of the poor. A generous mind will scorn to despise you on account of that poverty and distress under which you may be called to labour; but will rather esteem it an honour to exert itself to the utmost in every act of mercy and compassion, to alleviate the different sorrows which, from your situation, you must necessarily sustain.

“Suffer me, therefore, sincerely to condole with you, the loss you at this time lament, of one that never wished for higher promotion than to dedicate his time, talents and all, to your

temporal and eternal good. And at the same time faithfully to warn you, lest, after all his labours of love, he should only appear to rise up in judgment against you and increase your condemnation. Let me also beseech you to beware of that foolish confidence, too common among the poor, of supposing your mere outward poverty will procure you a place in heaven. A confidence this, which I fear deludes its thousands. No poverty can be an excuse for sin. Remember you must first be changed before ever you can be finally saved.

“Amidst the loss of all other friends, let me recommend to you one friend that still lives, and ever lives; the friend of sinners, the adorable Lord Jesus. Your poverty shall be no bar against the enjoyment of the riches of his salvation. The language of the Gospel is, ‘Whosoever will, let him come.’ He knows not how to shut the door of mercy against the beggar’s cry. As sure as they come, so sure shall they meet with the choicest blessings, ‘Wine and milk, without money and without price.

“I hope the Lord has put it into my heart to esteem it my honour to spend and be spent for your service. My condescending master loved the poor, and it is impious in his ministers to dare to despise them. I am glad to present you this as a proof that I love you, accept it therefore as such, and as coming from the heart of

“Your willing servant, for Christ’s sake,

“ROWLAND HILL.”

“Bristol, Nov. 28th, 1776.”

Mr. Hill was ordained to a curacy in Gloucestershire; but he presently found, that were he to restrict himself to the discharge of the clerical functions of that station, it would be at a vast expense of general usefulness. He, therefore, for about a dozen years after Whitefield’s death prosecuted his favourite plan of itineracy; preaching, wherever he could gain admittance within canonical walls, or to an audience without them. Very few churches and pulpits have been at his use, and a

them he could not obtain admission at pleasure. He could not long remain stationary within the narrow precincts of an obscure village parish; he consequently resigned his curacy, and, in imitation of his illustrious predecessor, Whitefield, he soon began to lift up his voice in a more extended sphere of labour; to proclaim the gospel to listening crowds in barns and meeting-houses, and when those were insufficient to contain the audience, or too distant or difficult to be procured, he scrupled not to take his station in streets, and fields, by the highways and hedges. "His condition in life," says Mr. Jay, "his youth, the sprightliness of his imagination, the earnestness of his address, produced an amazing attention and effect. He preached in the streets, on the quays (of Bristol), and at Kingswood, among the colliers. He spread through the several neighbouring counties of Wiltshire, Somersetshire, and especially Gloucestershire. In the latter county many were awakened and truly converted to God; where, by his labours also, several congregations, now large and flourishing, were founded. One of these was established at Wotton-Underedge. This drew much of his regard. He there built a tabernacle, and attached to it a dwelling-house, which he always afterwards continued to occupy as the centre of his retreat and excursions when in the country.

"Going forth to the Redeemer without the camp, he had of course to bear his reproach, and he rejoiced to bear it. Misrepresentation, and ridicule, and scorn, were plentifully applied by the haters of vital godliness. He frequently met with personal indignities from missives often employed at that period, especially when the service was out of doors. We need not wonder also, that he should meet with opposition for a time from some of his own connections, and be denied those supplies which produced occasional and temporary dependence. But how honourable was this! seeing it was an act of choice, a sacrifice to usefulness, a conformity to him who became poor, that others, through his poverty, might become rich*."

* Funeral Sermon, p. 24.

It was at this period of his life, that the writer of this account first enjoyed an opportunity of hearing him. It was in the city of Chester, about the year 1778, now fifty-five years ago; at which time, begging pardon of Mr. Jay for the use of an obnoxious term, against which he has entered his protest, Mr. Hill's preaching was in the highest altitude of rhapsody and *rant*! Twenty years after that, he heard him at Surrey Chapel, when age and experience had ripened the fruit of his education and studies; but, even then, there was a plenitude of enthusiasm about him, at least sufficient to demonstrate that he still adhered to the maxim on which he set out, namely, that "strong sense requires strong sound." He was then in the meridian of life; and, as one has described him a somewhat "handsome man, of a tall commanding stature, with highly expressive features, a keen searching eye, and a singularly fine nose, which was bold and aqualine, but in exact proportion to his face. His voice, too, was very powerful; and, at times, melodious. When he first entered the pulpit, his nervous agitation was often extreme, and every member of his body seemed to shake. He gave out his text indistinctly, and almost inaudibly; and it was only as he proceeded that his tones rose, and he became colloquial or humorous. He had the art of instantly arresting the attention of his hearers! and as he seemed to address them from the fervour of his own feelings, he often produced a strong effect on theirs. His action, too, though often ludicrously distorted, would sometimes, when he leaned forward on the sconces of the pulpit, become truly graceful and dignified.

Mr. Whitefield's popularity may be considered on the wane from about the year 1765, though he survived till 1770; but a good deal of the intervening period was spent in America and in voyages across the Atlantic, which the declining state of his health probably rendered necessary. It was at this juncture that Augustus Toplady began to ascend the horizon, and to shine as a star of the first magnitude among the Evangelical divines of the day. He was born at Farnham, in

Surrey, November 4, 1740, so that he was only four years older than Mr. Rowland Hill. His father, a captain in the army, died at the siege of Carthagera, soon after his birth. He received the rudiments of his education at Westminster school; but his mother being obliged to visit Ireland, to prosecute her claim to an estate in that country, he accompanied her thither, and was entered of Trinity College, Dublin, where he graduated, Bachelor of Arts. He received holy orders in 1762, and after some time was inducted into the living of Broad Hembury, in Devonshire. But finding his constitution much impaired by the moist atmosphere of Devonshire, he removed to London in 1775, and became the centre of attraction to the Evangelical party in the establishment. At the solicitation of his friends he engaged the chapel belonging to the French protestants in Leicester-fields, where he preached twice in the week, while his health permitted, and afterwards occasionally, until the time of his death, August 11, 1778; which it is supposed was accelerated by his intense application to study. He was, we believe, the ostensible editor of a small monthly publication, entitled "The Gospel Magazine," characterized by nothing so much as its caustic and acrimonious spirit against Mr. Wesley, the "great Apollo" of the methodists, whom he lampooned from month to month, both in prose and verse, with little regard to truth or decency, but to the infinite merriment of his readers. It is due to his memory, however, to say, that he possessed a considerable portion of learning, with talents for argumentation, and brought a large share of metaphysical acuteness into the Calvinistic controversy—perhaps more than any other writer since Jonathan Edwards—in proof of which I may refer to his volume on "The Church of England vindicated from the charge of Arminianism"—"The Doctrine of Absolute Predestination stated and asserted"—and, also, "Historical Proofs of the Calvinism of the Church of England." Mr. Toplady's own Calvinism was of the *ultra* cast; he was more Calvinistic than Calvin himself, which is much to be regretted.

because, unfortunately, he inoculated both Richard and Rowland Hill with the *virus*. The former, as he advanced from manhood to old age, appeared to become increasingly drenched in the system; while Rowland had wisdom enough to recede from the ground he had once taken, and contented himself with strenuously advocating the doctrines of free, rich, and sovereign grace, in consistency with the responsibility of man, and the duty of all who hear the gospel, to give it a cordial reception.

It has been said of Mr. Rowland Hill, by one of his biographers, that, "for some time he occupied himself in defending the works of Toplady, with whose bitterness he seemed to have been not less imbued than with his opinions." But, is this true of him? He published one or two pamphlets in defence of Whitefield, which were caustic enough, certainly; but nothing in favour of Toplady appears in the list of his writings, and we suspect, the paragraph referred to, must have been written by an Arminian, who, confounding Whitefield and Toplady, had in his eyes a certain pamphlet, entitled, "Imposture detected, and the dead vindicated, in a letter to a friend: containing some *gentle* strictures on the *false* and *libellous* harangue, lately delivered by Mr. John Wesley, upon his laying the first stone of his new Dissenting Meeting House, near the City-road." The same biographer thus proceeds: "By this means he acquired the esteem of that violent controversialist; who, however, highly disapproved of his uncanonical proceedings. In the end, his admiration of his master betrayed him into a violation of his dying injunctions; for, after the death of Mr. Toplady, he pronounced a funeral oration concerning him, although he had expressly forbidden that any such honour should be paid to his memory."

It is easy to descry a spirit of distortion pervading the whole of this paragraph. In what sense was Toplady Mr. Hill's master? Had the latter no mind of his own? How then came he to refuse the counsel of his oracle, and prosecute a line of conduct which exposed him to the severity of censure

from that master? Toplady had requested that no parade should be made about his funeral, nor any sermon preached on the occasion; and Mr. Hill delivered an oration, in place of a sermon, whereby “he was betrayed into a *violation of his dying injunctions!*” Verily, this seems to be making the most of the matter.

But it would be unjust to the memory of Mr. Hill, to allow these severe strictures to remain unrefuted, when the means of vindication are so easy. The respectable editor of the *Georgian Era* is pleased to say, that “For some time he appears to have occupied himself *chiefly* in advocating Toplady, and in writing pamphlets, which are characterized by *great controversial bitterness.*”—Vol. 1, p. 460. And this unfounded charge is echoed by the editor of the *Christian Advocate*, and by many others. The truth is, that Rowland Hill wrote no pamphlet in vindication of Toplady. The one already referred to, entitled “*Imposture detected, and the Dead vindicated, &c.*” was a defence of Whitefield—it could not be of Toplady, who was then living. The pamphlet made its appearance in 1777, and Toplady did not die till August, 1778. In that pamphlet, there is no allusion to Toplady; it relates to what Mr. Hill considered to be an unwarrantable attack on the part of Mr. Wesley, on the memory of Whitefield, particularly in endeavouring to filch from him the honour of being the first field-preacher. The writer of this Memoir is not called upon to justify all that is said in that pamphlet, but to state facts fairly and impartially between the parties. Mr. Hill himself did not attempt to vindicate all it contained. So far, indeed, was he from attempting that, that he published an ample and satisfactory apology, which ought to have disarmed his adversaries of their hostility. The truth is, that the pamphlet was hastily written, in the ardour of youth and under excited feelings, and not having the opportunity of seeing it through the press, for he was at that time itinerating in Devonshire and Cornwall, he committed it to the care of an *indiscreet* friend, who introduced several things into it with which Mr. Hill was

exceedingly grieved, when he, for the first time, saw them in print. Mr. Wesley, in his usual laconic way, answered the pamphlet in another, at the very moderate price of *one penny!* And this drew from Mr. Hill a second pamphlet, entitled “A full Answer to the Rev. J. Wesley’s Remarks on a late Pamphlet, published in Defence of the Character of the Rev. Mr. Whitefield and others: in a Letter to a Friend.” By Rowland Hill, M. A. Printed and published at Bristol, Oct. 1, 1777.

In this second pamphlet, (*penes me,*) Mr. Hill adduces ample proof of many things that he had asserted in his former production, brings forward some additional grounds of complaint against Mr. Wesley, for unjust aspersions of the characters of the Calvinistic Methodists, whom he had traduced as traitors, antinomians, &c. and then adds:

‘As I have now given what I conceive to be proof for every single fact I advanced in my last, relative to the merits of the cause, which, as I observed before, Mr. Wesley only denies, without scarcely the shadow of an argument to disprove what is alleged against him; I have only to leave the world to judge, whether Mr. Wesley has acted the part of a wise, good, or even honest man, in his several unjust reflections, both against the living and the dead? But whilst I thus steadfastly maintain the truth of what I have advanced, I take this public opportunity to acknowledge, that, however irritating the mal-treatment and false insinuations of Mr. Wesley might have been, a softer style and spirit would better have become me; and in justice to myself I must declare, that being absent from the press, some of the severest terms *I never saw* till I read them in print, nor did the original manuscript contain the least reflection upon ‘lay-lubbers, barbers, cobblers, tinkers,’ &c. &c. which, as Mr. Wesley justly observes, would have come with a very ill grace from me. I immediately sent to London to rectify some of those mistakes, but the impression was all sold off; and though there was a qualifying note added to those sold in Bristol, yet judging it too severe, I ordered those that remained unsold upon my arriving in this city, (Bristol,) where I stayed

about three days on my journey to Wales, immediately to be called in; and though I had once some thoughts of correcting the pamphlet for a second edition, yet upon mature deliberation, I judged it best to suppress it entirely."

Mr. Hill afterwards adds, what I have great pleasure in extracting from his pamphlet: "I am glad of this opportunity earnestly to request such as believe, carefully to maintain *good works*, as being the only solid proof we can give before men that we belong to God. No person has any right to take consolation from the blessed doctrine of election, but such as prove the sincerity of their hearts by the uprightness of their lives. When, therefore, such are stigmatized as Antinomians, may they be enabled to prove the reverse, by making conscience of all they say and all they do. Let them remember the divine direction given by our Lord, to 'feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick and imprisoned,' and as they would wish to manifest mercy to the utmost, let them be frugal upon themselves, that they may be generous towards others; that such as continue strangers to the gospel may 'by seeing their good works, be led to glorify God in the day of their visitation.'"

SECTION III.

FROM THE BUILDING OF SURREY CHAPEL, A. D., 1783, TO
MR. HILL'S FIRST NORTHERN TOUR, 1798.

MR. HILL lost his father about the year 1780, and, probably, coming into possession of considerable property by that event, he soon after projected the building of Surrey Chapel, in the Blackfriar's Road, London. As several of the circumstances attending this place are incorrectly stated in the Memoirs of Mr. Hill, recently published, it may be as well to rectify them before we proceed.

The Editor of the Patriot says, "In 1783 Mr. Hill laid th

first stone of Surrey Chapel, which was opened in 1784." The writer of a more extended memoir of him, in the *Christian Advocate*, tells his readers that, "In 1783, Mr. Hill laid the first stone of Surrey Chapel, which, from its octagonal shape, was jeeringly called the Religious Round-house, and, *in the following year*, he himself opened it for divine worship, by preaching a sermon which he afterwards published." The *Patriot* also speaks of the "sermon as preached *on occasion of laying the first stone* of the chapel in the Surrey Road." Now it so happens that all these statements, which are copied by the monthly journalists, *Congregational Magazine*, *Evangelical Register*, &c. &c., and even by Mr. Jay, in his funeral sermon, p. 25, are incorrect, as the following narrative of facts will shew. The sermon referred to is now before me, and I shall copy the title—"Christ crucified, the Sum and Substance of the Scriptures, A Sermon preached by Rowland Hill, A. M., on Whitsunday, June 8th, 1783, on the opening of the Surrey Chapel, St. George's Road. London, printed for Dilly, &c. 1783." It is dedicated to the subscribers to, and supporters of the Surrey Chapel, and a N. B. at the bottom of the dedication states, that "the profits arising from the sale of the sermon will be given to defray the expenses of this chapel;" towards which, it may be presumed, that they would go but a very little way! The truth is, that the first stone of the chapel was laid in 1782, and that it was finished in the spring of 1783. It is also clear from the title, that the sermon was not preached on occasion of laying the first stone of the building, as often stated, but on opening the chapel for public worship, on Whitsunday, June the 8th, and the following statement, which is given by Mr. Hill himself in the Preface, may serve to explain and account for much of those erroneous representations.

When the first stone of the building was laid Mr. Hill delivered an Address, which some anonymous person greedily seized hold of and sent it forth to the public as Mr. Hill's Sermon, on that occasion. And to quote his own words, "notwithstanding the public were apprized of the imposition in

several of the daily papers, yet different Reviewers, it seems chose to fight with this phantom of a publication, with a zeal and valour equal to that of Don Quixote of old, in his rencontre with the windmill. And though I believe I shall get myself more discredit by taking notice of their insolence, than I can possibly receive from such low arts of calumny and abuse—silent contempt being generally the best way of treating such mere impertinence—yet, as the authors of a novel production, called the European Magazine, are so amazingly facetious on this occasion, I hope no offence in an humble attempt to return the compliment in their own style.”

This is sufficient to shew how very sensitive the good man was at that time of day, and, for his own sake one cannot but regret to find him stooping from his dignified station to enter the lists with “impertinence;” he would have done himself much more honour by passing the matter over with “silent contempt.” But it may amuse the reader to see how dexterously Mr. Hill could combat with these gentlemen, and, therefore, I subjoin an extract.

“It is astonishing how confidence and bold assertion with them supply the place of truth. They tell the public I was born at *Hawthornth*, and I do not know that there is such a place in the world. Then they reduce a family of eight children to the number of five. Now here they may plead *ignorance*. Granted: for who can deny it? Their ignorance also taught them to tell the public, how ‘my infatuated hearers would walk for miles uncovered, during the severest rain, by the side of my carriage, singing hymns; that I have frequently spoken till I have spit blood, and much injured my constitution by my extraordinary energetic mode of delivery.’ Now it would be the greatest piece of ill-manners to presume to say, I am well, when a body of such learned gentlemen pronounce me to be sick; yet such are the wonderful effects of my fanaticism, that I feel no more bad consequence from my much injured constitution, than if my zeal had never exceeded the completest representative of laziness in a cassock.

“ But, now a word to them about the chew-of-tobacco-story, which, as they say, ‘ I told in one of my public harangues, about a carpenter and his labourer: how, the witty carpenter threw a chew of tobacco into the open mouth of the poor labourer, upon which the carpenter fell down and broke his leg.’ Now mind with what solemn grimace they conclude their tale: ‘ This narration we should deem too absurd for belief, if we had not heard it related in a public assembly, and, without controversy, by a *gentleman*, too elevated to coin so low a tale, and too *judicious* to be imposed upon by idle stories.’ Now were not such tales beneath contempt, I should be apt to ask this *elevated* and *judicious gentleman* to call upon me in St. George’s Road, and tell me the time when, and the place where, the aforesaid story was told, and I promise to give him (which is as much as he deserves) a quid of tobacco, the best Virginia, for his pains: but if that *gentleman* and the rest of his comrades, for I suppose they are all of a *kidney*, continue to go on deceiving the public, by pretending to give characters to people that they scarce know any thing about, stuffed with such gross falsehoods that thousands can contradict, cloaked with such an air of authenticity and confidence, I question if they must not soon leave off printing, as no body in their senses will give them *a quid of tobacco for their publication*.

“ And as they are pleased to give the public charitably to understand, that my methodistical doctrines of grace are ‘ hostile to morality,’ ‘ tend to overthrow the duties of good citizens,’ ‘ and the virtues of good men,’ I could almost find in my heart to ask them to explain to the public our enthusiastical notions of grace, and I dare say they would soon discover, that they know no more what they write against, than poor Quixote knew what he fought against, when he encountered the windmill. As it is impossible to encounter a fool but according to his folly, I have thus for once humbled myself in following these gentry in language almost as low as their own. Like eels, they are now at liberty to sink into their own mud

and dirt, as their safest place of refuge; nor should I have adopted such a style, had it not been for the wise man's direction, 'A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.'"

After such a retort as this, it is not likely that these sage reviewers would again feel much disposition to crack their jokes on Mr. Hill publicly: he administered to them their *quietus*, and perhaps saved himself no little annoyance in after life from the same quarter.

The text of Mr. Hill's Sermon is 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. "We preach Christ crucified," &c.—a favourite text with him to the close of his ministry. The topics enlarged upon are the ineffable importance of the holy Scriptures, as revealing a way of salvation to the guilty, fallen, and depraved children of men—the character of the Saviour as Jehovah incarnate, or the Word made flesh—his death, as a sacrifice for the sins of men—the divine good pleasure manifested in it—the ground of hope it opens up to the view of the guilty—and the motives which it presents to the believer to press after sanctification or universal holiness of heart and life.

But though unexceptionable on the score of doctrinal sentiment, the Sermon has very slender claims to distinction as a composition. Things are unhappily jumbled together which ought to have been kept distinct; the *lucidus ordo* is wanting, as indeed was generally the case with Mr. Hill's pulpit addresses. Like Whitefield, he was ever rambling and desultory—interspersing his Sermons with flashes of wit and pleasantry—sometimes with sallies of invective, especially when the Socinians or Arminians came in his way, and he had to defend his own creed against them. In no part of his life did he ever display much skill in "rightly dividing the word of truth"—his preaching was amusing rather than edifying: and this formed one important ingredient in his popularity. Even Mr. Jay, we imagine, will hardly go so far as to affirm, that his accuracy in stating divine truth constituted him the "cedar" in Lebanon. But to proceed.

Surrey Chapel being completed, and public worship regularly and statedly carried on in it, Mr. Hill was regarded as the minister or clergyman of the place, preaching there constantly during the winter months, and providing supplies for the rest of the year. The place, however, was not licensed as under his pastoral care. For, when, some years ago, the question of the liability of this building to be assessed for parochial taxes was under litigation, it turned out that it was vested in the hands of trustees; and that after the payment of all expences incident to the keeping of it open for the worship of God, only a very small surplus remained. Those who regarded Surrey Chapel in the light of a commercial speculation, and there have been many such, formed a very mistaken opinion of the matter; for it is pretty well known, that, however eagerly the sittings were taken, and however full the attendance, Mr. Hill was the last man to derive any pecuniary advantage from the success of the enterprise. To wish to make a gain of godliness assuredly formed no part of the character of Rowland Hill.

In conducting the affairs of this chapel, Mr. Hill adopted a line of conduct almost unique, and, as appeared to many, exceedingly inconsistent. "The independent and ambiguous ecclesiastical position which he assumed," says the editor of the *Patriot*, "as theoretically a Churchman, and practically a Dissenter—a dissenter within the church, a churchman among dissenters—necessarily involved him, especially in the earlier part of his career, in continual political skirmishing. His very catholicism sometimes put on an aggressive form; for of nothing was he so intolerant as of Sectarianism. But while he thus made himself many opponents, his blameless character precluded his having any personal enemies. The sarcastic or censorious polemic was forgotten in the warm-hearted philanthropist, the indefatigable evangelist, the consistent saint. It is quite true that Mr. Hill both said and did things occasionally, which few other men could have said with good effect, or done without imprudence. But the unimpeachable

integrity and purity of his intentions, the sanctity of his life, the charm of his manners, the dignity of true breeding which rescued from vulgarity his most familiar phrases and his most eccentric actions, conspired to secure for him, through life, the affectionate veneration of all who enjoyed the privilege of his acquaintance, or understood his character."

This is the testimony of one who had much better opportunities of knowing Mr. Hill, than has fallen to the lot of the writer of this memoir, and he is disposed to subscribe to its general accuracy. But while making this admission, he must beg not to be understood as palliating or being disposed to apologize for Mr. Hill's glaring inconsistency in trimming between the conformists and nonconformists. This can only be resolved into his total unacquaintedness with the nature, constitution, laws and discipline of the churches of Christ, as laid down in the New Testament. Had he ever entered properly into the import of Christ's good confession before the Roman governor, John xviii. 36, and marked how that principle is carried out and illustrated in the Acts of the Apostles, and apostolic epistles, it must have led him to a more consistent conduct, and one much more honourable to himself as a minister of Jesus Christ. But look at his plan of proceeding. "In conformity with his Church-of-England predilections," says a shrewd remarker, "the Liturgy was regularly read in Surrey Chapel by a gentleman in a snow-white smock-frock; and nothing was wanting but the substitution of collects for extemporaneous prayers, and the appendage of a steeple (consecration by a bishop excepted) to make Surrey Chapel as complete a church [meaning, upon the model of the national establishment] as any in London; for even the Lord's Supper was administered according to the forms of the establishment."

Now there had been more excuse for Mr. Hill, in this system of accommodation, had the established church been, in his eyes, "a chaste virgin," pure, immaculate, all perfection, as some have represented her; but how very differently Mr. Hill viewed her must be well known to all who have ever dipt into

a certain pamphlet, entitled "Spiritual Characteristics represented in an account of a most curious Sale of Curates, by Public Auction!" Consistency of character would have led such a person to "come out from among" such an heterogeneous mass of putridity, and to bear his testimony against the corrupt system that could tolerate such evils, and make a stand against them. Had he done so, the public would have given him credit for sincerity as well as consistency; whereas his remaining in the communion of the Church of England, which he did to the day of his death, yet inveighing against its corruptions with more acrimony and virulence than any dissenter of the age had done, is a sad libel upon poor human nature.

But there is a further evil connected with the matter under consideration which demands exposure. Mr. Hill's vacillating conduct, in halting between the Episcopal Church and the Dissenters, has thrown a powerful temptation in the way of many of the latter class to cloke their sentiments, do violence to their principles, and imitate his example. Such men as Jay of Bath, and James of Birmingham, are tempted to leave their own congregations to supply by the month at Surrey Chapel, every year; in doing which they must unavoidably connive at a system of things which, as members of the Congregational body, they must disapprove of. Some of those ministers, who have at various times officiated at Surrey Chapel, have not scrupled to assist in administering the "sacred elements," and that to kneeling communicants, while, for the unworthy purpose of letting the pews and sittings to persons to whom it would be repugnant to attend a place of worship where the prayers of the Church of England were not read, the Liturgy is now read in several of the dissenting meetings in London and its environs, the ministers of which are avowedly non-conformists, and some of them, it is said, even admitted members of the congregational board. On this it has been pertinently asked, "if dissenting ministers can conform to the Book of Common Prayer we should like to know what else

there is in the Church of England to which, with equal ease and consistency, they might not conform?"

It is highly amusing, to say the least of it, to listen to the lofty terms of panegyric, in which Surrey Chapel is spoken of by some ministers of this class. "No other place of worship in the kingdom," they tell us, "nor perhaps in the world, has ever, during the space of time, been the seat of so much genuine piety and charity. Its congregations have been more united—its services have been more devout—its sermons have been more interesting and impressive—its contributions to all forms of charity have been more abundant, than those of any other sanctuary within or without the pale of the established church. It has set the example and taken the lead in all the most important schemes of christian benevolence, by which the last forty-five years have been distinguished, and never was any former age so truly distinguished by such glory and virtue!" To one part of this inflated panegyric we can readily subscribe; it has far surpassed any other place of worship with which we are acquainted, in the number and amount of its collections; the latter were proverbially great. The sum annually collected at Surrey Chapel, for charitable and religious institutions, has been from fifteen hundred to two thousand pounds a year, for many years past; but then the whole of it has not come from the congregation stately assembling there. The Anniversary Meetings of the London Missionary Society, and also the Baptist Missionary Society, drew multitudes of strangers thither on those occasions, who went for the purpose of contributing to their support, which could not fail to aid in swelling the amount. Nevertheless, even after making these deductions, the fact will remain incontrovertible. Liberality was a distinguishing trait in Mr. Hill's own character, and his flock imbibed much of his own spirit. On two occasions on which collections were made generally throughout the kingdom, in all churches and chapels, viz. the Patriotic Fund at Lloyd's, and the subscription for the relief of the people of Germany, who suffered so

dreadfully from the ravages of the French armies during the late war, the collections at Surrey Chapel are recorded to have been the largest raised at any one place. In allusion to these facts Mr. Hill is said on one occasion, while preaching elsewhere, for the benefit of some distressed persons, to have concluded his discourse in the following terms: "Put your hands into your pockets, and be sure there is something in them when they come out. Let us have a good round, Surrey Chapel collection!" If it be true, as told of him, the methods to which he is said to have had recourse, on some occasions, in order to stimulate the liberality of his hearers were not always unobjectionable. He is said, on one occasion, for instance, to have used the following device in order to extract the money from their pockets: "Let those," said he, "who have bank notes (and I myself will be standing at the door) go out first; let those who have gold follow; let those who have silver go next; and let those who have copper only, stay till every body else has gone out." This was surely very indiscreet, to say the least of it; but the system of begging has of late years been carried to a most unwarrantable extent in London, to the disgust of all reflecting minds, and it led the late Mr. Robert Hall to remark, that the ministers in London had but one text to preach from, and that was, "GIVE US MONEY." Even Mr. Hill himself seems, towards the end of his days, to have been brought to more sober reflection on the matter. Those demands upon his benevolence became so numerous as to be burdensome. Writing to a minister in the country, with whom he was in habits of friendly intercourse, he said, "So, you are coming up to London on the *delightful* errand of begging. Much good may it do you! I have had enough of that to last me for a good seven years to come." He seems even to have been led to doubt whether the enormous sums collected for the use of the Missionary Society were used with all the prudence and economy that was necessary; for on one occasion, after a collection had been made for that society, he rose, and, addressing himself to those who surrounded him on the

platform, he said, "Take care how you spend this money, brethren; much of it consists of the hard earnings of the poor." A very salutary hint.

Although Surrey Chapel was the centre of Mr. Hill's ministrations for half a century, he was in the constant habit, during the summer months, of making tours throughout the kingdom, and sometimes into Scotland and Ireland, every where preaching Christ's gospel, and calling sinners to repentance. He had a country residence at Wotton-under-Edge, in Gloucestershire, about 108 miles from London, where he had a house and a chapel. This enabled him to speak of himself as "Rector of Surrey Chapel, Vicar of Wotton-under-Edge, and curate of all the fields, commons, &c., throughout all England and Wales." While Surrey Chapel was always crowded, the numbers that flocked to hear him, as he itinerated through the country were prodigious, often compelling him to take the field, and preach under the canopy of heaven. It has been conjectured that his person was more generally known to the inhabitants of Great Britain, than that of any other individual; there being scarcely a town of any size in which he had not preached at one time or other, and thus been publicly exhibited. About the time he opened Surrey Chapel he was united in marriage to Mary, sister of Clement Tudway, M.P. for the city of Wells, who brought him considerable property, and thereby increased his means of liberality. Mrs. Hill died without issue a few years ago, and her husband felt the bereaving stroke sensibly—so acutely, indeed, that when the hour arrived for conveying her mortal remains to the silent tomb, at Wotton, where she died, he could not be prevailed upon to quit his room and accompany the funeral procession. Of this lady, Mr. Jay says in his funeral sermon for Mr. Hill, "I am sorry and unable to account for it, that so little notice has been taken of this excellent female. She was a truly gracious woman, of a very sound understanding, and possessed the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. She was formed for a minister's wife

by her prudence, peaceableness, untalkative temper, and unintermeddling conduct. She was singularly suited to the man she espoused, and our friend's obligations to those properties in her character which tended to qualify the peculiarities in his own were great; and I have no doubt he would have been willing to say of her, as Mr. Newton did of his wife, 'I never followed her advice, but I had reason to approve of it: and I never acted against it, but I had cause to repent of it.' It is but just to add, that Mrs. Hill *always* found his demeanour in relative and private life perfectly correspondent with his character in official and public life." p. 32.

Now, if what Mr. Jay says in the conclusion of this sentence be true, then the number of anecdotes which have obtained currency for years, in which Mr. Hill is represented to have made this amiable woman the butt of his own ridicule and of the mirth of his congregation, must be false!

In 1790, Mr. Hill favoured the world with a pamphlet of general and permanent utility, entitled "A Warning to Professors, containing aphoristic observations on the nature and tendency of Public Amusements, &c." A second edition of it was immediately called for; and, in 1806, a third impression appeared with an additional Preface, and an Appendix, consisting of two long letters addressed to the Rev. George Burder, explanatory of certain paragraphs, incautiously penned, which appeared to bear hard upon the dissenters, and consequently gave great umbrage. The latter were not backward in repelling the unwarrantable attack; and among others that entered the list, one of the ablest was Mr. Benjamin Flower, then of Harlow, who published "A Second Warning to Christian Professors, occasioned by some passages in the first, containing injurious reflections on Protestant Dissenters, in five letters to the Rev. Rowland Hill, A.M." A shrewd and sensible pamphlet, the force of which he appears to have felt. But passing this—

Mr. Hill's production is an exceedingly valuable one, and discovers more close thinking and able reasoning than charac-

terizes his general writings*. The amusements against which he enters his protest are—Theatrical Exhibitions—the opera-concerts, and musical exhibitions—horse-races—the card-table—the ball-room—gaudy attire in females, &c. Each of these is examined *seriatim*, and their corrupting tendency pointed out. In what relates to plays and pantomimes, Mr. Hill has availed himself of the verdict of a Deist, the celebrated J. J. Rousseau, of Geneva; who, infidel as he was, yet pointedly condemns them as panders to vice, and destructive of all virtuous principle in young people. The following sentence will show the reader the principle on which the author's reasoning turns:—"All

* Mr. Jay has described this pamphlet as "full of humour," which much surprised me; having, at the time, read only the *third* edition, in which I found far *less* of humour than in almost any other of the author's productions; and the idea instantly occurred to me whether this edition might not differ from the former ones. I therefore procured, with some difficulty, the first and second editions of the pamphlet, and upon collating the three, soon found my suspicions confirmed. They all differ essentially; so much so, indeed, as to render them almost different works. For, instance, the following note which appears, p. 18, of the first edition, is not to be found in either the second or third. "A *sensible* old lady ordered a large hole to be cut in the door to let in her *cat*, but forbad a less hole to be made at the same time, that she might not be troubled with the impertinence of her *kitten*. She soon, however, discovered, that the cat and kitten could come in through the same hole." The long note, too, is withdrawn, which occupied almost wholly pp. 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, *first edition*, in which he recommends to his *reverend* play-going brethren, the compilation of a new manual of devotion, which should contain forms of prayer on the following occasions:—

A devout supplication before going to a tragedy.

Another before going to a comedy

A short form of prayer to be said before a farce.

Another short prayer before a harlequin entertainment.

He advises also a "puppet-show-prayer," that people's heads may be made the wiser, and their hearts the better, for their devout attendance there. He thinks there should also be a proper prayer to be used at entering a ball-room—and a card-assembly—as well as the huntsman's prayer—and the horse-races' prayer, &c. All this is bitter, biting sarcasm on the clergy

public amusements and entertainments which are invented by the people of the world must be according to their own natural appetites and dispositions. It is their entire study to make them palatable to their own inclination and taste. But the real Christian lives in the constant habit of self-denial, as respects these corrupted appetites and dispositions ; therefore, what *delights* the one, *disgusts* the other."

In 1795, Mr. Hill found himself called upon to resume his work on the subject of theatrical entertainments, in consequence of the magistrates of the county of Gloucester having licensed a company of strolling players to perform at Wotton Underedge. The magistrates who granted this license were only two in number, and one of them proved to be a clergyman, which led Mr. Hill to publish "An Expostulatory Letter to the Rev. W. D. Tattersall, A.M., rector of Westbourne, Sussex, and vicar of Wotton Underedge, Gloucestershire ; in which the bad tendency of the admission of Stage Amusements, in a religious and moral point of view, is seriously considered." It is an octavo pamphlet of 44 pages, and informs us, that some portion of the inhabitants of Wotton Underedge had petitioned the magistrates to grant the license, on hearing which Mr. Hill drew up a counter-petition, shewing cause why it should *not* be granted ; but the former succeeded, and the players commenced operations. Mr. Hill procured printed copies of the plays acted ; and, in this pamphlet, points out their abominable tendency to corrupt the morals of the people, and then gravely remonstrates with the vicar for being so indiscreet as to lend his sanction to such demoralizing amusements. The pamphlet closes with a word to the reader, intimating that—"from the serious opposition made to this new introduction of Stage amusements into Wotton Underedge, he concludes that a future visit from the players was now over, since all the support from the ladies of the town and neighbourhood must be withdrawn, from what they must have felt by the first exhibition, to be *nasty, profane, and next, to obscene.*"

SECTION IV.

MR. HILL'S TOURS TO SCOTLAND, AND THE PUBLICATIONS TO WHICH THEY GAVE RISE, A. D. 1798—1800.

MR. HILL'S visits to Scotland in the years 1798-9, his indefatigable exertions in evangelizing the regions of Caledonia, and the various pamphlets which he was called to publish in consequence thereof, constitute an interesting epoch in his life; but to render the narrative properly intelligible to readers of the present day, it will be necessary to introduce it with a short historical sketch of the ecclesiastical state of Scotland at that crisis. It was at the earnest solicitation of Robert Haldane, Esq. a gentleman of large property in that country, that Mr. Hill undertook this missionary tour, and as that Gentleman's name will often present itself to us in the sequel, some little account of him and his friends may be here advantageously introduced. And that I may not be guilty of misleading the reader by any erroneous statements, Mr. Haldane shall be allowed to speak for himself. The following extract is taken from an "Address to the Public, concerning Political Opinions and Plans, lately adopted to promote Religion in Scotland," &c. published by Mr. Haldane, A. D. 1800.

"Before the French Revolution, having nothing to rouse my mind, I lived in the country, almost wholly engrossed by country pursuits, little concerned about the general interests or happiness of mankind, but selfishly and unthankfully enjoying the blessings which God in his providence had so bountifully poured around me. As to religion, I contented myself with that general profession which is so common and so worthless, and that form of godliness which completely denies its power. I endeavoured to be decent, and what is called moral, but was ignorant of my lost state by nature, and of the deep depravity and corruption of my heart, as well as

of the strictness, purity, and extent of the divine law. While I spoke of a Saviour I was little acquainted with his character, the value of his sufferings and death, the need I stood in of the atoning efficacy of his pardoning blood, or of the imputation of his perfect obedience and meritorious righteousness : and of the sanctifying influences of the eternal Spirit, to apply his salvation to my soul. When politics began to be talked of, I was led to consider everything anew. I eagerly caught at them as a pleasing speculation. As a fleeting phantom they eluded my grasp ; but missing the shadow I caught the substance ; and while obliged to abandon those confessedly empty and unsatisfactory pursuits, I obtained, in some measure, the solid consolations of the Gospel ; so that I may say, as Paul, concerning the Gentiles of old, He was found of me who sought him not.

“ Sometime after this, when I trust I had been led to choose that good part which cannot be taken from any one, and to adopt the views of religion I at present hold, I first heard of the Baptist Missionary Society, and their mission in Bengal. It immediately struck me that I was spending my time in the country to little profit, while, from the command of property, which, through the goodness of God, I possessed, I might be somewhere extensively useful. After considering the matter deliberately for about six months, and having obtained my wife’s consent, I proposed to Mr. Innes, then minister at Stirling, to go to Bengal, and to spend the remainder of our lives, in endeavouring to communicate the precious truths of the gospel to the Hindoos who were living under the British government.”

After maturely weighing the matter for six or eight months longer, the subject was communicated to a few others who were invited to join them, and among these were Mr. Greville Ewing, now of Glasgow, the late Dr. Bogue, of Gosport, and his own brother, James Alexander Haldane, now pastor of the Baptist church in Leith Walk, near Edinburgh. Every thing being so far arranged, Mr. Haldane sold his estate, it was said for

thirty thousand pounds, and made preparations for quitting the country along with his friends, to become a missionary in India; a noble instance of disinterestedness and Christian zeal, such as, taking all the circumstances into account, has no parallel, since the days of Bishop Berkeley, if, indeed, the good prelate's conduct will bear a comparison. But to proceed:

Aware that without liberty from the government in India, they would not be permitted to act upon the extensive scale proposed, Mr. Haldane applied to the East India Company in London for permission to go out, explaining in the clearest and fullest manner, the object which he and his friends had in view; but leave was refused. He next entered into a correspondence with Mr. Dundas (afterwards Lord Melville), at that time one of the Secretaries of State, but with no better effect. Both the Government and the East India Company put their *veto* on the plan, and Mr. Haldane and his friends were compelled to abandon it. This was in the year 1796.

Thus foiled in their favourite project, reflection led them to view the Lord's hand in it; and Mr. Haldane was led to say, "for my own part, I am satisfied in having made the attempt, although it appeared by the event clearly the will of Providence, that we should not go out. I have not a doubt this was ordered for good; and our being prevented, whether from unworthiness, or from whatever other cause, which we know not now, we shall know hereafter. I could not, however, help observing the massacre of the Europeans that lately took place at Benares, where it is probable we should have been, had we obtained our desire. With the apostle, then, I would here thankfully exclaim, 'O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.'"

Mr. Haldane now began to turn his attention to the state of his own native country, and to consider what he could best do to ameliorate the condition of its inhabitants, and promote the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom in it. Missionary societies had, for some time, been exerting themselves to send the

Gospel to distant climes, while it occurred to him, that little or nothing was doing at home, where a deficiency of the means of religious instruction was confessedly obvious. He, therefore, prevailed upon his friends to aid him in his exertions for accomplishing this. The first thing which they attempted was the establishment of Sunday Schools, and this was carried into effect to a considerable extent and with great success. In the middle of the summer of the year 1797, three of his friends, viz. Messrs. James Haldane, Aikman, and Rate, proceeded on a preaching tour to the Northern counties of Scotland, and the Orkney isles. They left Edinburgh on the 12th of July, and returned about the 10th of November, when they communicated to the public the result of their mission in the form of a "Journal," of which three editions were printed. But their labours were not confined to preaching; they distributed 20,000 tracts in the course of their tour, which would continue to preach after they had left.

In the month of December, of the same year, a society was formed in Edinburgh, which had for its object the more effectually evangelizing of Scotland, and it was resolved to name it "The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home." But other avenues to usefulness continued to present themselves to view. Mr. Haldane devoted a considerable part of his property to the building of large places of worship, and hiring and fitting up others in most of the principal towns, in which the Gospel might be stately preached and churches collected; among these was the Circus in Edinburgh, which had been in the possession of what is called in Scotland, the *Relief* congregation, who first occupied it as a place of worship, but had left it. This being a large and commodious place, it was determined to invite Mr. Rowland Hill to pay a visit to Scotland, for the purpose of opening the place, and conferring upon it the advantages of his popular talents for a few of the first sabbaths.

Accordingly, in compliance with the request of Mr. Robert Haldane and his friends, Mr. Hill quitted Wotton-Underedge on Lord's Day, July 15th, 1798, after the afternoon service,

on his way to the North, travelling in his own one horse chaise, and attended by a single man-servant. Proceeding through Worcester, Kidderminster, Wolverhampton, Hanley, Macclesfield, Manchester, Lancaster, Penrith, Kendal, Carlisle, &c. &c., at most of which places, if not all of them, he preached either at evening, morning, or noon-day; he reached Edinburgh on Saturday, July 28th. Mr. Hill's description of the metropolis of Scotland is so picturesque that it merits insertion, and I therefore produce it.

"The city and its situation is the most captivating and romantic I ever saw. The buildings are good; the neighbouring hills are beautiful, and beautifully dispersed; the bridges over the old town and the new are most curious, and the best contrived imaginable. The Frith-of-Forth, a fine arm of the sea, about two miles from the city, gives the scenery a look of the most lively and pleasant description. I was the more struck with the delightful situation of Edinburgh, as almost all the country between Carlisle and that city is dreary and bad. The churches in Scotland evidently seem almost the only neglected buildings. Many of them are slovenly and mean. St. Andrew's Church, in the New Town, however, exhibits a specimen of neatness and taste." Mr. Hill was received at Edinburgh, at the hospitable abode of Mr. James Haldane, in George Street, where, he declares, nothing was wanting but more gratitude and thankfulness on his part for such a kind and affectionate reception.

On the following morning, Lord's Day, July 29th, Mr. Hill preached for the first time in the Circus, and I give his own reflections upon it. "The building is large and supposed to contain above 2,500 people. The morning congregation was decently numerous. My subject was the prayer of Moses, "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." Exod. xxxiii. 14, 15. I preached to the people the feelings of my heart. I felt the call to this city to be solemn and important, without our God we can do nothing. A much larger congregation attended the evening service, and I took another sub-

ject, just suited to the frame of my mind; 1 Cor. i. 22-24 and employed some time in shewing Paul's method of treating his proud Corinthian hearers."

Mr. Hill continued at Edinburgh through the week, preaching on Tuesday at Mr. Robinson's Chapel of Ease; on Thursday, August 2, at Leith, in a timber-yard, to about two thousand; and, on Friday, on the Calton Hill, to a congregation of not less than four thousand! On the following Lord's Day he preached three times, viz., at seven in the morning, and again at noon, both in the Circus; but in the evening, thousands could not come near the place. He retired, therefore, to the Carlton Hill, and preached, it was supposed, to ten thousand people.

Accompanied by his friend, Mr. Haldane, Mr. Hill now began to make excursions into the interior of the country. On Monday, August 6, they proceeded to Stirling; thence to Dumblane, Crieff, Dunkeld, and Perth; where Mr. Hill found his old friend, Mr. Gairie, whom he formerly met with at Dublin. This good man, though licensed as a probationer of the Church of Scotland, and presented to the living of Brechin by the Crown, had been deprived of his preferment by the General Assembly, because he had not received an academical education. This cruel treatment of a man universally respected, pure and holy in his life and conversation, evangelical and sound in his views of the Gospel, could not fail to call forth Mr. Hill's vituperation; and, in truth, he does not spare in his castigations. Another minister, Mr. Young, who suffered at the same time, and for the same cause, Mr. Hill says, after he was rejected, came into England, where he languished for a few months, and died of a broken heart! Descanting on the consequences of this barbarous Gothic law which exists in the Church of Scotland, Mr. Hill remarks that "many persons, with a natural thirst of learning, by private helps and by personal application, have appeared among the first of the learned world; while, in our seminaries for public erudition, a stupid thick-head set may undergo the discipline

of an education, which they receive against their will, and which they have no sense or appetite to digest; and, after all, appear, if they get into the ministry much more fit for game-keepers, jockies, farmers, or graziers, than ministers of the Gospel. *It is not so, blessed be God, with us in England!*" How strangely Mr. Hill forgets himself on this occasion, and how little cause of boasting, he, as an Episcopalian, had over his northern Presbyterian neighbours, need not be told to any who have read a certain pamphlet, entitled "The Sale of Curates."

Returning from Perth through Kinross, Mr. Hill reached Edinburgh, in time for Lord's Day, August 12, where he again preached both morning and evening. On the Monday he proceeded to Glasgow, and preached out of doors to at least five thousand people in the church-yard of the High Church. On Tuesday he proceeded to Paisley, and preached again in the church-yard to a congregation as large as that at Glasgow. Paisley, he pronounces the Paradise of Scotland; and adds, "My soul loves Paisley, for there I believe Christians love each other."

After visiting Greenock and Dumbarton, Mr. Hill returned to Glasgow on the Friday, where he had again promised to preach. The congregation were assembling, as before, in the High Church-yard; but a fall of rain at the moment compelled them to seek a shelter, and they had recourse to Mr. M'Leod's chapel, which was supposed to contain two thousand people, but many went away for want of room. The kindness which Mr. Hill experienced at Glasgow led him to a grateful recollection of it, and to say, "The kindness and attention of magistrates and ministers, and of the people at large in the city of Glasgow, will ever be remembered by me as a matter of thankfulness before God, and of deep humiliation to my own mind for services so poor among a people so affectionate and kind."

On Lord's day, August 19, the third of his residence in Edinburgh, Mr. Hill preached twice, viz. at seven in the

morning, when the circus was crowded; but he adds, "it was now quite out of the question to preach within doors on the Lord's day evenings. On the Calton Hill I addressed the most solemn congregation I have seen for many years. Fifteen thousand, on the most moderate computation, was said to attend; some suppose a larger multitude. I know, on these occasions, our principal aim should be to alarm the sinner. This I attempted from Mark viii. 36, 37, from the consideration of the immortality of the soul, and the awfulness of eternity."

During this third week, Mr. Hill continued to visit other parts of the country, accompanied by Mr. James Haldane, who now took the place of his elder brother; and on Tuesday evening reached Dundee, where he preached to two thousand people out of doors; and on the following morning a second sermon in the same place. They next proceeded to St. Andrews, where some indications of opposition led Mr. Hill to think, that having been treated in the west so much like a gentleman, he was now about to be treated as an apostle, *with persecution*; though after such indulgences, he owns he had no great appetite for such *sour sauce*! this he feared, because some had tasted it before him. He preached at eight o'clock in the morning; and with less interruption than he apprehended. "It is true, indeed," says he, "that a few *things* fluttered about at the extremity of the evening congregation. A pleasant sunny day produced those butterflies in human shape, who appeared vastly clever in their own conceits, and gave themselves such airs as might be expected from them; consequently, entirely beneath our attention and regard. Notwithstanding, nothing can equal the pitiable situation of such hearers; as the lightness and frivolity of their minds prevents them from all possibility of receiving good; while mere froth floats upon the understanding, it requires almost more than a miracle of grace to persuade such 'to watch unto prayer,' and to 'give all diligence to make their calling and election sure.'"

Of this University town, Mr. Hill's description is short, but interesting. It was once the metropolis of Scotland, but now much deserted. The ruins of the cathedral, upon a promontory hanging over the sea, leave but a very faint idea of the original magnificence of the structure, but you are pleased with its retired situation. The Colleges of St. Andrews still continue to make it a place of some little importance. Externally, the buildings do not claim any great share of admiration. Of its internal contents, as they respect the divinity line, Mr. Hill says, "I have not sufficient information to enable me to say, whether it mostly abounds with holy devoted youths, much devoted to prayer with and for each other, longing over souls in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and waiting till they shall be sent forth to preach the Gospel; or with others, that were sent thither with no other design, than 'to be made up for the trade.'"

Returning homewards towards Edinburgh, Mr. Hill preached on Thursday evening at Kirkaldy, and again on Friday morning—where, as he says, being all his lifetime given to blunder, he trespassed against the order of public worship by omitting the second hymn, for which offence he was seriously reprimanded by an aged gentleman, one of the elders of the church! But crossing the water to Leith, he preached in the evening to two thousand people in Mr. Shirreff's park.

On Lord's day, Aug. 26, he preached at seven in the morning in the Circus, which was quite crowded; and in the evening on the Calton Hill, to fifteen or twenty thousand people. But we cannot be surprised that such frequent preachings, and to such immense crowds, should prove too much, even for the constitution of Mr. Hill: he was engaged to preach at Musselburgh, but unable to proceed thither, and Mr. James Haldane supplied his lack of service. However, he was sufficiently recovered to preach at Dalkeith on the following day, and at Musselburgh on Thursday evening. On Friday Aug. 31st, he preached his last sermon to the people at Leith—the congregation consisting of about three thousand souls.

Lord's day, September the 2d, was his last Sabbath in Edinburgh, when he preached three times in the course of the day. The circus could scarcely contain the early or noon congregation; but in the evening Mr. Hill again took his station on the Calton Hill, where the congregation was "astonishingly large"—it was computed to be eighteen or twenty thousand people. On this occasion a public collection was made for the use of the Charity Work-house, which was thankfully received by the magistrates of the city. The following day, he was again engaged in three exercises: in the morning he addressed the children in Lady Maxwell's School—afterwards the unfortunate women at the Philanthropic Asylum—and in the evening, for the last time, at the Circus; after which he set off for England, accompanied by Mr. Robert Haldane.

Mr. Hill's journey homewards took up nearly three weeks; he passed through Berwick-upon-Tweed, Alnwick, Newcastle, Durham, Darlington, Leeds, Rotherham, Sheffield, where a singular event occurred worth recording. Just as the service was about to conclude, a man with a drawn sword attempted to force his way through the congregation to the place where Mr. Hill was standing: "while he brandished his sword with great vehemence, and struggled hard to reach me," says Mr. Hill, "the people arrested him, threw him down, and disarmed him. Through the kind providence of God no one was hurt, nor was the tranquillity of the meeting so much disturbed as might have been expected from such an extraordinary event. Upon the seizure of this unhappy man he appeared to be entirely insane." This happened on the Lord's day evening, Sept. 17th, when the service was in the open air, and the audience consisted of ten thousand people.

On Monday Mr. Hill proceeded on his journey through Derby, Coventry, Warwick, Evesham, and Painswick in Gloucestershire, preaching at all the places mentioned, and reached Wotton-Underedge on Saturday, September 22d, where he found all well, and in comfortable circumstances,

which drew from him this pious ejaculation: "Indulgent God, thy name be praised!" Thus, says he, "I have now finished a nine weeks Gospel tour of full 1200 miles; have preached in much weakness to many thousands; and have been more or less engaged on different calls near eighty times, with no other calamity than a little indisposition for a few days; and the temporary lameness of the same horse which conveyed me through all my journey, excepting the short respite which he required till he could overtake me on the road. Without, also, the least personal insult from any quarter, excepting a small share of a distant hiss of false aspersion, and, I trust, unjust reflection. For them I only quote that fine expression in our Church Liturgy, 'Pardon our persecutors and slanderers, and turn their hearts.'"

Soon after Mr. Hill had arrived at home, he complied with the earnest solicitations of Mr. Robert Haldane to print his Journal for public inspection, together with such strictures and remarks as had occurred during his stay in Scotland. This he soon did, and sent it into the north to be there printed; but upon more mature consideration it appeared, to both Mr. Hill and his friends, advisable to give further scope to discussion, and to print in London. The MS. was therefore returned to the author, who now added to it an Appendix, nearly twice the size of the Journal itself: and the whole was published in 1799, under the following title:

"Journal of a Tour through the North of England and Parts of Scotland: with remarks on the present state of the Established Church of Scotland, and the different secessions therefrom. Together with Reflections on some party distinctions in England; shewing the origin of these disputes, and the causes of their separation. Designed to promote Brotherly Love and Forbearance among Christians of all denominations: also some Remarks on the propriety of what is called Lay and Itinerant Preaching. By ROWLAND HILL, A. M."

This enormous title will convey to the reader a general notion of the multifarious contents of this bulky pamphlet;

but having communicated, in the preceeding pages, the substance of the Journal, we shall take a cursory review of the different parts of the Appendix, in which there are some things instructive and valuable, others amusing and laughable, and a few that might have been conveniently omitted.

To the Journal is prefixed a Letter to Robert Haldane, Esq. in which, after reminding him that it was by his invitation he ventured on his late visit to Scotland, and had at his request printed his Journal, he thus proceeds:

“ Having previously entertained a high opinion of the state of religion and religious knowledge in the North, you know, by my correspondence with you and your brother, with what caution I was persuaded to undertake the journey: I always conceived, that though error and formality had made their inroads into Scotland, yet that the Gospel interest was attended with a superior glory in opposition to all the attempts of the mere heathen moralist, or others, the more avowed enemies of the Gospel. On my arrival in Edinburgh, I was grieved to find the cause of religion so much below the standard I had conceived. I observed, with regret, that good men, fettered by the trammels of education, or by the laws of their different churches, by no means exerted themselves as the sacred cause most assuredly demanded. As matters thus opened to my view, I was the less embarrassed, and the path of duty appeared much more plain before me. My prayer was answered—‘Teach me the way in which I should go, for I lift up my soul unto thee.’ As I trust, I heard the voice of a gracious Providence distinctly say, ‘This is the way, walk ye in it.’ ”

After the Journal, and as a Preface to the Appendix, we have a Letter from Mr. Hill to James Haldane, Esq. which is too singular in its complexion to escape notice. It is so happily characteristic of the writer, that I shall give it entire.

“ TO JAMES HALDANE, ESQ.

“ My dear Sir; or rather, my much respected Brother and Fellow-labourer, in the Gospel of God our Saviour.

“ Directed by my high esteem for your Brother, I ventured

on the publication of my Journal: from my respect to your ministerial labours, I am now happy to address these remarks on my visit to Scotland, to your more immediate attention. I am now *an old stager* in the itinerant work, and I bless God for the line in which I have been called; being assured I have followed the will of God therein, as I am satisfied the salvation of many souls has been promoted thereby.

“In preaching through England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, I always conceived *I stuck close to my parish*. We are to ‘preach the Gospel to every creature, even to the end of the world.’ Go on, my dear Sir, be the maul of bigotry, and of every sectarian spirit among all denominations; declare vengeance against the unscriptural innovations of narrow-minded bigots, who, finding the word of God uncompliant to designs like theirs, have combined together to support their dogmas according to certain rules of their own creating; and all these, as contrary to the sacred designs of God, that all Christians should be brethren, and love as such; as the designs of Christianity can be to those of Mahomet, the Pope, or the Devil.

“In the name of God, my beloved Brother, with the sword of the Spirit in your hand, and the life of God in your heart, pursue those hideous monsters even unto death. But you have given sufficient evidence how much you respect the Christian, wheresoever you find him, and however disfigured, not only by the wart, but even the wen of bigotry. I will not say that to a fraction, all my observations on this subject may correctly comport with yours; though I flatter myself you and I are pretty near the mark;—if we differ, I am sure we cannot disagree. Our hearts, I am persuaded, are congenial, though our original calling was completely different.

“You were educated for the maritime life, and from a situation creditable and lucrative, commenced a *peddling preacher*, crying your wares from town to town, at a low rate indeed, ‘without money and without price;’ and scattering religious tracts as you travel from place to place—while it was my lot to

be bred to the trade, and to serve a regular apprenticeship for the purpose; but being spoiled in the manufacturing, I never received but forty shillings, a story too trivial to relate, by my occupation as a churchman. Affluence is a snare; a decent, independent competency, is a blessing—a blessing, indeed, if thereby we can preach Jesus freely, and prove to the poor of the flock, that we can sacrifice our own profit, if we can be profitable to them. Let it then be our glory to suffer shame and contempt for the sake of him who ‘hid not his face from shame and spitting’ for our redemption. ‘Holding forth the word of life’ amidst the ‘dead in trespasses and sins,’ meekly contented to suffer even ‘the loss of all things,’ should we meet with such a day of tribulation, provided we are but enabled to ‘win Christ,’ and are blessed ‘with souls for our hire.’

“With much sincerity of affection, I am, and ever hope to remain, your affectionate Brother and fellow-labourer in the gospel of our salvation

“ROWLAND HILL.”

There appears to have subsisted a very warm and ardent affection, at this juncture, between Mr. Hill, and Messrs. Robert and James Haldane; it manifests itself in all their proceedings and in all their writings. But it was not destined to be permanent throughout their days. Seven years had not elapsed before both the Messrs. Haldane were led to perceive from the New Testament, that, in order to be members of Christ’s visible kingdom, they must be baptized on a profession of their faith in Christ, as the Son of God, the true Messiah, the only Saviour of guilty men. Thus they became Baptists, and Scotch Baptists too, and it is to be feared that from that moment Mr. Hill would place them in the class of “bigots”—men of a “sectarian spirit,” against whom the Maul was to be lifted up! But their becoming Baptists was not all. They learned from the New Testament, that all national establishments of Christianity were, in their nature and constituent principles, *Anti-christian*—that Mr. Hill’s own

favourite Church of England was only one of the unchaste daughters of the Mother of harlots, and as such the object of the vials of the wrath of heaven, Rev. xvi., and viewing it in this light, how could they pray for its prosperity, or approve of Mr. Hill's connection with it—a thing in which he himself gloried? In fine, they learned a lesson from the New Testament, which Mr. Hill never could be taught, but against which his zeal flamed forth on all occasions with lamentable bitterness; and that was, “that all Christians are bound to observe the universal and approved practices of the primitive apostolic churches recorded in Scripture*.” Now, this principle was clenching the nail to the head; and when Mr. James Haldane published his book on the “Social Worship of the Apostolic Churches,” contending for Weekly Communion—the Prayers and Exhortations of the private brethren, as a part of their public worship—a Plurality of Elders in every church, in opposition to the one-man-system; with various other things of divine institution among the first churches, but almost totally neglected by the moderns, it is easy to see that an end must be put to all *brotherly* intercourse between the parties. Extensive as was Mr. Hill's Catholicism, it had its limits—it never could stretch itself so far as to comprehend those *whose consciences were bound* to a dutiful observance of all that Christ had commanded, or his apostles instituted in his name. This was bigotry and sectarianism with a witness, and what he could not endure. Give him a religion which had nothing sectarian in it; *i. e.* which left him at liberty to pick and choose what he should take and what he should leave, and that without detriment of Christian fellowship with all the Lord's people!—overlooking the fact, that if we would be partakers of the blessings which Christianity holds forth to the guilty perishing children of men, we must take it *as a whole*, not only believing all the doctrines which Christ and his apostles taught, but acknowledging no other lawgiver than

* See Haldane's View of Social Worship, p. 26.

HIM, and resisting whatever is of human institution in his kingdom. Every departure from the rule prescribed by the inspired apostles, and exemplified in the churches planted under their direction, must be laid to the account of the Man of sin, the Son of perdition, even though it were sanctioned by the authority of a Hill or a Jay! I now return to Mr. Hill's appendix.

He introduces his observations and remarks with a short review of the Ecclesiastical History of Scotland, which certainly is not devoid of interest. The subject is taken up from the time of the Reformation; he notices the contest between Episcopacy and Presbyterianism, each of which alternately borrowed the civil sword to "fight it out," while real Christianity was bleeding under the wretched dispute. Mr. Hill next proceeds to give his readers an outline of the Presbyterian form of Church government, from which I shall extract an interesting paragraph.

"In Scotland there are eight hundred and ninety parishes. These parishes are divided into districts or bounds, and each has its elder; and over these the minister presides as Moderator, but without a negative. These are directed to meet once a week, to consider the affairs of the parish. This is their lowest church court. Appeals lie from hence to the next court above this, viz. the Presbytery, of which there are sixty-nine, each consisting of different contiguous parishes. Each minister, with one elder, out of each Kirk Session, compose a Presbytery. These meet in some central station, and choose a Moderator. Above this is the third Church Court, the Provincial Synod. These receive appeals from the Presbyteries, and can control their acts; their body consists of the several Presbyteries of the province, and meet twice a year in some central place. We have still another step to climb before we reach the summit of power belonging to the established church of Scotland, and this court is called 'The General Assembly,' intended no doubt to collect *the cream of the whole*. This court consists of Commissioners from the Presbyteries,

Royal Burghs, and Universities. The Presbyteries send representatives, ministers, and ruling elders, according to their number. Each Royal Burgh sends one ruling elder, Edinburgh sends two, and every University has its representing Commissioner, and all these subscribe the Confession of Faith, as though they believed it! and over these presides a Royal Commissioner, claiming a right to convene and dissolve the Assembly, which right is at the same time claimed by the Assembly itself, by the voice of their Moderator; so that this Assembly, to save the credit of both claimants, has a double dissolution, and, by all accounts, no matter if its dissolution was *eternal!* for such a motley mixture of representatives of ministers and elders, many of whom are lawyers and even officers of the crown, from Presbyteries, Royal Burghs, and Universities, prove, it seems, a strange group when collected together *as a body*. I speak not of individuals. I do not hear that there is any charge against them, that they are ‘righteous-over-much;’ nor are they, it is to be feared, very near akin to the ‘General Assembly and Church of the first-born.’ I should suppose that as their method of managing the Church of Christ would be much like themselves, the seceders may have sufficient grounds to provide a better and purer government among themselves.”

After some strictures on Mother Church, Mr. Hill proceeds to take a view of the different classes of dissenters from the Scottish Establishment, and the first of these that attracts his notice is the *Cameronians*, with their solemn league and covenant. With this sect and their persecuting principles, he makes himself not a little merry, and particularly with their great gun against Episcopacy! Under this head comes in the well-known anecdote of the *toadery* at Wotton-under-Edge, which has been echoed from John-a-Groat’s house to the Land’s-end in Cornwall, and produced many a laugh!

Next comes the Burghers and Anti-burghers, constituting the “Associate Synod Presbytery,” whose vindication was pleaded by the learned Dr. Jamieson, as will presently appear.

Then follows the "Kirk of Relief," which originated in the deposition of Mr. Thomas Gillespie, who vehemently opposed the law of patronage. And on a review of the whole Mr. Hill is led thus to apostrophise, "How very strongly do the corrupted passions of men mix themselves with the sacred cause of God! and how very apt are we to think we are doing God service, while fleshly contentions for a mere party blind our eyes, and forbid us to remember that 'the kingdom of God is not meats and drinks, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.' I fairly acknowledge I am no enemy to establishments, under certain limitations, which limitations I acknowledge, are very rarely observed. Should any supreme magistrate, in some heathen land, become Christian, suppose under the influence of the present Missionary exertions, is he not at liberty, nay, is it not his duty, to promote the Gospel to the utmost of his power?" Such is Mr. Hill's apology for establishments of Christianity; but to this we answer, that all the assistance which the Gospel asks from the civil magistrate is, to let it alone—all it needs is simple toleration. If he put forth a finger to aid it by human laws he corrupts it. 'Tis as the dead fly in the apothecaries' ointment!

But, rejoins Mr. Hill, "the chief magistrate or magistracy of the land may have some forms or modes respecting Christianity, which *they may think* preferable to others. Shall not liberty be granted to such a magistrate to take that body of Christians under his more immediate cognizance and support, who voluntarily subject themselves to such rules, provided he presumes not to compel others to submit to it, or to support it?"

Now the answer to this is very easy. All national establishments of Christianity are necessarily *exclusive*. The moment any civil magistrate takes a particular "body of Christians under his more immediate cognizance and support," he puts forth the unhallowed hand to preserve the ark; and the very circumstance of Christianity receiving cognizance and support from the civil magistrate must tend to corrupt and secularize it. Is it possible Mr. Hill could be ignorant of the

fact that Christianity maintained its purity no longer than while it was proscribed by the ruling powers, and that from the moment it was taken under "the cognizance and support of the civil magistrate," corruption rushed into the church like an impetuous torrent, and Antichrist mounted his throne, changing times and laws, and desecrating the temple of God?

But Mr. Hill is extremely inconsistent with himself in what he has written on this subject. At one time, he would have us to believe that the establishment of Christianity by penal laws is of divine appointment; for, what else can he mean by the following sentence? "Such is the sad corruption of human nature, that I should be greatly alarmed were Government to cease to patronize and promote the cause of Christianity, now that miracles designed for her primitive support have ceased: the very name of it in some places would be entirely obliterated. If, therefore, it were the design of Providence that, in a future day the civil magistrate was to lend his protecting and supporting hand to the Christian cause—we should be cautious not to speak lightly against what *God himself has condescended to ordain for good.*" This, to be sure, is putting the matter hypothetically. "*If it were the design of Providence, &c.*" But against this we place the good Confession of Christ before the Roman Governor, "My kingdom is not of this world."—And again, "Put up thy sword."—Maxims, of which by the bye, Mr. Hill never condescends to take the least notice! On the contrary, in opposition to them, he boldly declares, "the rulers of the earth may and *ought* to support and protect Christianity." p. 106. Now it is demonstrable that the rulers of the earth, *as such*, can only do this by the power of the sword—by penal laws, or persecuting edicts, which the King of Zion has forbidden to be used in his cause. What then becomes of Mr. Hill's reasoning in favour of establishments? But let us hear him further, for he certainly is very amusing on the subject.

"It is readily admitted," says he, "that national churches, from a native tendency toward abuse, are never likely to

prove the most spiritual in any land! Without, therefore, an unlimited protection of every dissentient who can prove that there is nothing in his religion inimical to the civil Government, they will become injurious; for then persecution naturally commences, and nothing can be so contrary to the mind of Christ as the spirit of persecution. On these principles alone, I declare myself no enemy to the Established Episcopal Church of England, or the Presbyterian Establishment in Scotland; while I deeply lament over each, that *by their connexions with the civil power* [that is, by their being what they are, viz. Established Churches!] they have lost so much of their original purity and design. Even the Primitive Church of Rome would never have become the Whore of Babylon, had not the favours of the world, and the embraces of Constantine deprived her of that chastity which was her original glory," p. 106-110. The plain import of all this is, that the corruptions of Christianity are mainly owing to its alliance with the State, or its being established by Acts of Parliament; which, nevertheless, "God himself has condescended to ordain for good!" In this manner Mr. Hill answers himself and in so doing reminds one of the remark of the profound Pascal, "How happy it is to have to do with people that will talk *pro* and *con*! By this means you furnish me with all I wanted; which was to make you confute yourselves."

But to do Mr. Hill justice, we must acknowledge that he is not less instructive than he is amusing. He is a firm friend to toleration, on which account he hates Popery with a perfect hatred; and terms it the "*incurable abomination*"—strangely overlooking the fact that his own Church of England is established upon the very same intolerant principles as the Church of Rome. "Who would believe," says he, "that Popery and Presbyterianism among Seceders are so near akin? Their engagements to *extirpate, suppress, and overcome*, sound so very like the decretals of Pope Innocent the Third, on the other side of the question, that one would almost think his Holiness, by an invisible agency, had a hand in framing the

Covenant." But is not episcopacy, in its constituent principles, as intolerant as either Popery or Presbyterianism? Does not the Church of England lay claim to the power of decreeing rites and ceremonies, and settling controversies in matters of faith? Let us hear one of her own sons on this subject: thus he writes, "Our Liturgy was first established by the Convocation, or provincial Synods of the Realm, and thereby became OBLIGATORY, *in foro conscientiæ*, and was then confirmed and ratified by the supreme magistrate in parliament, and so also became OBLIGATORY *in foro civili*. It has therefore all authority, both ecclesiastical and civil [he should have added, that of God alone excepted!] As it is established by ecclesiastical authority, those who separate themselves, and set up another form of worship, are *schismatics*, and consequently are guilty of a *damnable sin* [let the dissenters mark that!] which no *toleration* granted by the civil magistrate, can authorize or justify. But, as it is settled by Act of Parliament, the separating from it is only an offence against the State, and, as such, may be pardoned by the State. The Act of Toleration, therefore, as it is called, has freed the Dissenters from being offenders against the State, notwithstanding their separation from the worship prescribed by the Liturgy; but it by no means excuses, or can excuse them from the schism they have made in the Church; they are still guilty of that sin, and will be so as long as they separate, notwithstanding any temporal authority to indemnify them*." Here then is the cloven foot fairly exposed! the Act of Toleration which secures to dissenters liberty of conscience, has interposed betwixt them and the Clergy, and wrested out of the hands of the latter the power of persecuting, to the sore annoyance of many of them who "gnaw their tongues with pain." The State tolerates, the Church does not! Where then is Mr. Hill's ground of boasting, and why has he withheld Episcopacy from the station it should retain in connection with Papacy and Presbyterianism?

* Wheatley's Illustration of the Book of Common Prayer.

But he has a salvo in reserve—"When I speak of Episcopacy," says he, "I beg at all times to be understood as pleading for such a reduced Episcopacy, as was recommended by those learned and pious Episcopalians, the Archbishops Usher and Leighton, which they conceived was the Episcopacy of the primitive church. Bishops then claimed no other power than what was delegated to them, by the elective voice of the presbyters and people at large. In the purer days of the Church this election naturally fell on the most spiritual and wise of their body. Around him they voluntarily collected as toward a centre; they gave an affectionate submission to him as a father, and their government was thereby both strengthened and simplified. *A mere shade* of such an Episcopacy still remains in the English Church, for upon the death of a bishop, the king gives his *conge d'élire*, or leave to elect, to the presbyters of the Cathedral Church, at the same time *recommending* a person for their chair; which *recommendation* they no more dare refuse than they dare to eat a red hot salamander. I beg that it may be further noticed, that my silence respecting many allowed defects in the Church of England neither arises from partiality nor approbation. *Her connexion with the State I sincerely regret, as it is impossible she can be otherwise than corrupted thereby.* Her doctrines are pure; her liturgy with a little further reform, I conceive to be excellent; and according to the present state of things, one of the greatest national blessings we can enjoy, especially as no establishment upon earth directs her ministers to read in the public service so much from the pure word of God; but her discipline is most grievously defective. As to her Church Courts, *spiritual courts*, falsely so called, it is enough to say they were of Roman birth. I am, however, no ecclesiastical politician, therefore *further than this the deponent sayeth not.*"

p. 108.

Nor, in truth, was it necessary to add another word in order to shew to the world, that to be consistent, Rowland Hill ought to have been a Dissenter! As an apology for his con-

formity, nothing can be more lame and impotent than what he has here said. He is an advocate for Episcopacy—but it is an episcopacy *sui generis*—such as never did exist in the form of an Established Church, of which the king or queen for the time being is the head, and consequently makes bishops at his or her pleasure. The Episcopal Church must have no connexion with the State! Why this is what every dissenter in the land, who understands his religious profession, and the true grounds and reasons of dissent, contends for. But, “the doctrines of the Church of England are pure.” Are they Calvinistic or Arminian? Mr. Hill insists they are the former—but nine-tenths of his fellow labourers in the vineyard contend they are the latter; and consequently, from the days of Archbishop Laud to this present time, Arminianism has been preached, with few exceptions, from *all* the pulpits of the Church of England. Of what avail then are the thirty-nine articles, seeing that, on his own shewing, their true meaning and import are almost universally perverted? And as to the Liturgy, its excellence is mere matter of opinion—a point on which Doctors differ! The writer of these pages was certainly trained up in a religious veneration for it; and what little of classical learning he got, was bestowed upon him with the view of making him a Clergyman of the Church of England; but when it pleased God to reveal his Son to him, and give him to distinguish, in some happy measure, between that fabric of *human* wisdom, the Church of England, and the glories of Messiah’s kingdom, as an economy of Grace, spiritual and heavenly, consequently “*not of this world*,” he was led to view things in a very different light, and he broke off all connexion with the Episcopal Church of England, nor has he ever been the subject of a momentary wish to resume it. No honours, or emoluments connected with it, not even the prospect of a bishoprick, or yet an archbishoprick could ever tempt him for one hour to resume that connexion, though it has often fallen to his lot to know by painful experience, what is intended by the “*res angustæ domi*,” of the Roman poet.

When Mr. Hill comes to deal with the Scotch Independents, Baptists, and Pædobaptists, he dismisses the subject in a very summary manner, though in a way not very creditable to his own understanding. The sum of what he has to say is, that, however strongly they may protest against persecuting for conscience' sake, he would not venture to pass his word for them more than for others, that had *they* possessed the power, they, too, would not have persecuted (p. 128.) Now, in this I must take the liberty to say, that with all his vaunting about Catholicism and liberality of sentiment, he has shewn himself *less* liberal than that noted infidel, David Hume. The latter when speaking of the Independents of the seventeenth century, frankly acknowledges, that "of all Christian sects, this was the first which, during its prosperity, as well as adversity, always adopted the principle of toleration."* In saying this, Mr. Hume did them no more than justice; while by insinuating the doubts he has done concerning them, Mr. Hill has shewn that he did not understand the principles of their profession; or that, if he did, he was no way disposed to do them common justice. He treats the Scotch Baptists with sovereign contempt, because they refuse to communicate at the Lord's table with unbaptized persons; but, surely, this needs no apology. They regard the ordinance of Baptism as the rite of initiation into Christ's visible kingdom; they find, on examining the New Testament, that in the days of the apostles, baptism on a profession of the faith, was an essential pre-requisite to church-fellowship; and they, therefore, consider that Christ himself has fixed the terms of communion, *from which they are not at liberty* to depart. They are far from denying that Christ may admit his own children to communion with himself in the invisible blessings of the Gospel, whom they could not admit to fellowship with themselves in his visible kingdom; and, for this cogent reason, because no such communion is exemplified in the New Testa-

* Hume's History of England, ch. lvii. anno 1644

ment, which they are bound to regard as the rule of their proceeding in all the affairs of his church or kingdom. It was very easy for Mr. Hill to dismiss this subject by "wonders never cease;" this was much easier than to find an argument by which to refute their principles. The late Mr. Robert Hall, of Bristol, has raised a wonderful dust upon this subject; but after all that he has written "about it and about it," the matter remains just where he took it up. If the churches of the present day are under any obligation to copy the example of the primitive apostolic churches in their social intercourse, which those of the baptist persuasion all acknowledge, more or less, then it must unavoidably follow that the admission of unbaptized persons to the Lord's table is an unauthorized practice, and demonstrably wrong.

But the vituperation which Mr. Hill so liberally bestows upon the dissenters at home and abroad, on account of what he terms their "bigotry" and "narrow-mindedness," is not worse than what he deals out to his own church. He takes credit to himself; nay, *he blesses God* that he has transgressed the canons of the English church a thousand times; "they were the mere *bully* of the high priests of the day!" p. 162, *note*. Surely, after this, the dissenters can have no just cause of quarrel with him because he chooses to lash them for their steady adherence to what they believe to be the instituted order of the house of God. Had he had to construct a church of his own devising, we should have witnessed a curiosity indeed! The church of England is fundamentally wrong in a thousand instances, and the dissenters are rarely right. Such is his eccentricity, that nothing must be restricted to rule and government. Hence his long tirade against the office of *deacon*, pp. 142—147, *note*; and also that of *elder*, pp. 153, 155; both of which are no better than a string of sophisms. The universities and dissenting academies meet their just castigation. Let us hear him on this subject.

"Two evils are the natural result of thus *making up* men for the ministry. Many may be educated to a belief of the

doctrines of grace, without being converted to God by the grace of those doctrines. They undergo a sort of *pseudo spiritual* manufactory. They are taught to *make* prayers and sermons according to what is called an orthodox plan, while the spirit and temper of the man renders him a dead weight upon the cause. From a want of spirituality in himself, he overlooks the same want in others. Hence the complaint, which too generally, and I fear too justly prevails, of conformity to the world, among professors of religion. They can attend the assembly, the card-table, and even that complete synagogue of Satan, the play-house itself, as all being consistent with *their sort of saintship*. They have discovered an easy way of reading these texts of scripture, ‘Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds.’ ‘Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world.’ And, again, ‘Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you;’ and many other passages that might be quoted. Thus the truths of God are disgraced by the lax conduct of professors, and the doctrines of the Gospel are thereby brought into disrepute,” p. 160, &c. Who can help regretting that such important truths as these should be mixed up with silly anecdotes about “pig-tails and periwigs?”

They have, in Scotland, what are called episcopal chapels; that is chapels upon the model of the church of England. Their congregations, Mr. Hill tell us, are no where very numerous, but this is made up to them in being mostly *very polite*; and he gives us the following sample of what prevails among them. “The general pre-requisite is, that the minister should be a *good reader*; that he should not *squall* out the English liturgy similarly to the *twang* of a Scots precentor, with their doggrel version of the psalms of David; and so far so good. Next, that he should be a polite and easy gentleman; or, to sum it up in the language of that popular book, ‘The New Whole Duty of Man,’ that he should produce

nothing either in his conduct, or from the pulpit, but what is *made easy to the practice of the present age.*"

Mr. Hill enters his protest with more than ordinary earnestness against the method of conducting their psalmody in Scotland. Referring to the version of the psalms of David, in common use throughout their churches and chapels, he asks, "Is it metre?—is it poetry?—is it English?" He might have advanced a step farther, and asked, "Is it always common sense?" These are questions that I have myself often asked; and never have I ceased to wonder at the strange prejudices that exist among the Scotch baptists in favour of that doggrel version. It is pleaded that the psalms of David, being the language of inspiration, are the only proper vehicle of our devotions in praise. But, as Mr. Hill pertinently asks, "Why Old Testament language while we praise, and nothing but the purest New Testament language while we pray?" Are they not both equally to be regarded as solemn acts of our devotional worship before God? Why then should not the same rule hold for both? And why should we have recourse to such distorted language when we sing, and yet attempt a style so different when we preach and pray?" Besides, there is another question which I have sometimes proposed to the sticklers for this version, to which I never could get an answer; and it is this:—"If this version of the book of psalms be what its advocates would persuade us to believe it to be, why are not the whole of the psalms made use of at alternate seasons, which is so notoriously *not the case*, that in the course of nearly half a century, during which I have been connected with churches that used it, I do not remember to have seen more than about half a dozen of the whole one hundred and fifty psalms, of which the book consists, even partially made use of?" The first, the nineteenth, the hundredth, and about six stanzas, selected from the hundred and nineteenth, comprise nearly the sum total of these choice pieces which are thought worthy of being sung!

As to their melody, Mr. Hill says "sounds are of much

less consequence than sense. I therefore say less against what they call singing, though in general, it is not singing, nor even yet "making a joyful noise unto the Lord;" for it is in general a *doleful* noise indeed. Now, if singing be the command of God, why should it not be well performed? Some, indeed, have supposed that snuffing, bellowing, and groaning, have added to their devotion in prayer, and from a parity of reasoning, may have concluded also in favour of this most barbarous way of singing; but while others have ears, and any taste or judgment for musical sounds, such sort of psalmody, instead of adding to their devotion, cannot but excite their extreme disgust," p. 175. He very properly adds, that on all sides extremes should be equally avoided. Concertos and oratorios are never fit for public worshipping assemblies. Singing may be strong and good, yet simple, plain, and neat; so that all may join. Charms of these sorts are from God himself; they soften and soothe the mind, producing a most happy preparatory frame for future good. On the position proper for this act of worship, he says, "Perhaps, I lament what may be supposed of less consequence still; I mean the posture of singing. Now, this act of divine worship is an immediate address to Deity himself, the posture is ever mentioned as that of *standing*; nay, angels are described as lying *prostrate* in praise. Sitting is a slovenly lazy posture for an act of such high devotion."

I shall now take leave of this interesting Appendix, with a few lines which occur on Lay Preaching: "I do think that the words *Clergy* and *Laitie*, as they are generally understood, are more nearly allied to the tricks of Rome than most people are aware of; and if the people who love their Bibles read the New Testament, without the pre-supposed distinctions of sects and parties, they would discover uncommon simplicity in the first ages of Christianity." A very just observation, and well meriting attention. The reader may find the subject handled in my Lectures on Ecclesiastical History, Vol. 1. p. 376, *note*.

It was not to be expected that Mr. Hill's preaching as he did to such immense multitudes, during the two months he passed in Scotland in 1798, followed as it was by the publication of his Journal, and the free strictures passed on all classes of religionists by means of his Appendix, should produce no impression on the public mind. These things occasioned no small stir, and embroiled him in a controversy, of which it will now be proper to take some notice.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland holds its annual sittings in May; and the liberty which Mr. Hill had taken with its fair fame, and the wounds he had inflicted on that illustrious body, called into exercise their deliberative wisdom. To check the plague which had gone forth and now threatened consequences of the most direful cast, they issued three official papers—the first was styled “The Declaratory Act,” which threatened a war of persecution—the second was, what they termed “The Pastoral Admonition,” warning all the members of the Church of Scotland against the danger of *promiscuous hearing* and *lay preaching*—and the third was a solemn act of excommunication passed on two of their ministers, viz. Mr. Greville Ewing and Mr. William Innes.

Mr. Hill took a second journey to Scotland the following year, and on his arrival in Edinburgh, in the month of June, 1799, was presented with these important documents, the product of the General Assembly held in the preceding month. During the four weeks he spent in the country, visiting some part of the Highlands, and itinerating from place to place, he drew up some remarks on these curious papers, and published them in a pamphlet entitled “A Series of Letters, occasioned by the late Pastoral Admonition of the Church of Scotland, as also their attempts to suppress the establishment of Sabbath Schools, addressed to the Society for propagating the Gospel at Home.” BY ROWLAND HILL, A.M. pp. 45, octavo. These letters are eight in number, and are dated from Edinburgh, Dundee, Montrose, Aberdeen, Hantly, Glasgow, &c. &c.

In these letters, Mr. Hill fairly throws down the gauntlet, and *challenges* the General Assembly to take it up. He tells them, in the apostle's words, "they could not prove the things whereof they accused him;" and quotes the decalogue, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour *." In his first letter, referring to the Society for propagating the Gospel at home—an institution formed under the auspices of the two Messrs. Haldane, Aikman, Ewing, Innes, and other excellent men, Mr. Hill asks, By what authority could the General Assembly, or any other body of people, whatever high powers they may claim, presume virtually to criminate any religious society, however mean and contemptible in their esteem, and cruelly to charge them with the high and odious crimes of sedition and treason, without the shadow of proof to substantiate such a charge? By what authority had they a right to command and direct all their clergy throughout Scotland, who are under the iron hand of their jurisdiction, to be the vehicles of their wanton and cruel invectives, by reading, and notoriously against the judgments and consciences of many of them, even in the house of God itself, and in the hours of sacred worship, a paper replete with charges the most virulent and unjust? He thus closes his letter—

"Satisfied, therefore, of our right to claim the protection of the civil power from the dangerous censures of our ecclesiastical accusers, we could not be blamed were we to seek redress for our insulted characters, dedicated to the service of the Gospel, from the laws of the land. But we wish no such methods of revenge, though, were we now silent, we should criminate ourselves. Our cause is the cause of God and truth; and while we can make it appear that 'in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not with fleshly wisdom, we have had our conversation in the world;' and while we are satisfied that it is *falsely* 'all manner of evil is spoken against us for Christ's sake, we will rejoice and be exceeding glad.'"

* Motto in the title-page.

It must be admitted that Mr. Hill treats both the "Declaratory Act," and the "Pastoral Admonition," of this august body with very little ceremony. The whole of this "Series of Letters" is interesting and instructive, abounding with just and striking sentiments, such as one is surprised to meet with from the pen of a clergyman of the church of England. He attacks the "patent" which these *monopolists* of church dignities and preferments have obtained for *manufacturing* proper subjects for the ministry. For instance, it was one of the complaints of the "Pastoral Admonition" that "the men who assume the character of missionaries declare, that *every man* has a right to preach the Gospel, and are now traversing the whole country, without any sort of authority; without giving any public pledge of the soundness of their faith, or the correctness of their morals, and without the advantages of regular education, and of preparatory knowledge."

To this Mr. Hill answers that "every man *has* a right to preach the Gospel: that the Gospel ministry is open to all who have grace, gifts, and ability for the work. He nevertheless admits that none go forth from the society to preach, nor are any admitted into the Sunday schools as catechists, until they are thoroughly examined, and are well known to be competent to explain the Scriptures to their poor neighbours; and he calls upon the magistrates "to see for themselves whether the catechists be not men correct in their morals, sound in their faith, loyal to the government, and quite of sufficient ability to fulfil the humble sphere of erudition entrusted to them. This, says he, will bring the matter to an issue, whether the Assembly, in so liberally accusing us on this score also, have not proved that *they know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm*. When people, however, have a deal of dirt to throw, it is always expected that some will stick. But the grand core hid under all these mighty complaints is, evidently, lest the propriety of the present monopoly for public teaching should be superseded. Rome *wisely* locked up the Bible in the

Vatican: Protestants may read it, but the explanation of it is to be referred to their spiritual guides. Now, we ask the plain question, whether some of their hearers may not be as clear-headed, and have as much grace in their hearts, as many of their ministers? If so, as Providence calls them, by what part of Scripture are they forbidden to communicate such knowledge to such as choose to receive it?" He then goes on to notice how matters stood in the days of Christ and his apostles, when the disciples, persecuted at Jerusalem, "traversed the country, up and down, leaving the religion in which they were *bred up*," as the Assembly *elegantly* express themselves! "All then instructed," says Mr. Hill, "who had ability; and this might be done without destroying the standing order of the ministry. But to do this now would be encroaching upon the priestly policy of the times. The people then were all heathen; but now, since Christianity has been *established by law*, and we have *established churches*, we are all Christians: Acts of Parliament have made us such! If fabricated into Christianity alone by such a power, we wonder not we find a nation of government Christians, as far from real Christianity as the north is from the south. Is it to be supposed, therefore, that a mere Act of Parliament can decree that people shall be Christians, properly so called? As well might the legislature attempt to cure fevers and consumptions, as to establish real Christianity, and to heal the diseases of the mind by a law. However, therefore, we should be thankful when the law runs in favour of the Christian dispensation, yet Christianity itself will want something further than a civil power to bring it into existence. Are we to wonder, therefore, if we discover hordes of these political Christians and their political ministers with them by thousands in every country, not a whit better, even in common morality, than heathens themselves?"

Besides, "what avails that ministers should teach others, if these afterwards may not communicate their knowledge in return? From the cobbler to the philosopher, is not this ad-

mitted? Yet in the affairs of religion it is supposed to be the highest infringement upon the sacred office. The objection is, if this liberty be granted, every ignorant pretender will presume to be a preacher, and error and enthusiasm will universally abound. Look then at those who are *regularly bred to the trade*, and ask if we are better furnished through this *monopoly*. If monopolies be injurious in other branches, why less so in this? Now, I have really found so much good sense among officers of the army and navy, tradesmen, manufacturers, and others who have made the word of God the subject matter of their serious study and meditation, that I have been delighted to hear them, according to their natural ability, discourse from the word of God, while the dry, artificial ‘manufacturer of a text’ has frequently left me hungry and unfed; and I seriously believe we do a great injury to the Church of Christ by admitting any into the boasted standing ministry, till by more private exertions, they prove their natural ability to the work. No one should be deemed fit to preach before many in a town, till he has just preached to a few in a village. Thus brought forward by degrees, he becomes ‘an able minister of the word of life.’ Let people consider these simple thoughts and then revert to the ‘Pastoral Admonition,’ and see if they have not been throwing mere dust in the air in all their pompous declamations about themselves and their church.”

“One would suppose, according to them, *the church* existed not but under their establishment. Another church claims the same exclusive character—the Church of Rome! Scotland has now followed her *holy* example, she now owns and communicates with no church on earth. In her retired corner she sits as a queen; she also chooses to keep no faith with heretics, and so dresses them as to make them pass for *devils* in the public eye. We still grant she shall pass for *the church*, admitting at the same time, the meaning the New Testament gives of that word, when mere mobs of Jews and Gentiles were also called *the church* (ἡ ἐκκλησία, Acts xix. 32, 39,

40,) so that all the unhappy *mobbish* appearances which are exhibited in different *church-courts*, wherever they meet is still THE CHURCH. But she should remember also, that the church in a richer sense of the word, is a company of holy people, collected in the name of the Lord Jesus, though in an upper room, or a private house, or even in the open fields; and the church still, though not established by law."

"Now, how far the church established by law has a right to persecute the poor church which has not been indulged with civil power, must be left with her to decide, both as it respects her determination concerning heresies, and how far these heretics should be corrected. If *the church* of the General Assembly will but first *clear their brains* by reading Locke on the Human Understanding, and afterwards the same invaluable author on Toleration, perhaps they will be led into a little more *moderation* than as yet they enjoy. People who are red-hot with a persecuting spirit, are apt to lose their reason, and then they will be fanatics and enthusiasts of course. Besides, a little good reading of this sort under present circumstances, might be of considerable advantage, as moral philosophy has a wonderful tendency to calm the mind; and strong fears, whether real or imaginary, are known to be very prejudicial to the constitution. And strong indeed their fears must be, if they can apprehend general ruin both of Church and State to be so near at hand. Whether these fears, therefore, be the *hobgoblins* of the imagination, or the justly dreaded evils of the day, ought to be considered. Surely she cannot suppose that a set of *altogether ignorant vagrant teachers*, either among themselves, or from England, concerning whom it has been *politely* hinted, 'it is not known whence they be,' will ever be able to upset a body of clergy so correctly tutored, and so generally admired, and a church also so firmly established by law; and especially as all the adherents of these ignorant vagrants are now completely cut off from making any of their sly inroads into the church by a late holy bull, styled 'The Declaratory Act.' "

In conclusion, Mr. Hill tells this reverend body, that the proceedings to which they, in their great wisdom, had had recourse to put down these Sunday Schools, had recoiled upon themselves. Their own character which had been sinking year by year was now reduced to its lowest pitch. "They have, moreover," says he, "enlarged our congregations almost universally, and promoted a spirit of investigation and inquiry, before unknown; having accomplished the very end we most fervently desired."

"Having thus freely delivered myself before the public in vindication of my own aspersed character, and that of others, I have only to remark, that I should have been happy, if the cause would have admitted a softer style. But it has ever appeared to me, that language strong and pointed alone, would bring matters to an issue. A style cold and tame, would have sounded like a tacit acknowledgment of guilt. That great and good man Dr. Witherspoon, in his Ecclesiastical Characteristicks, judged a still severer style of irony as absolutely necessary years ago, when the Church of Scotland had not taken such rapid strides of declension as in the present day."

From Mr. Hill's controversy with the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, we now turn to his rencontre with the General Associate Synod, to wit, the SECESSION, comprising the Burghers and Anti-burghers, who were quite as much exasperated with him and his friends as the former. This highly respectable body met in solemn assembly, at Edinburgh, on the 8th of May, 1799, and after due deliberation, passed an "An Act of the General Associate Synod," in which, to use their own emphatic language, they "lifted up a testimony" against these novel and dangerous proceedings on the part of Mr. Hill and his friends. Thus they speak.

"The SYNOD, finding, from papers before them, that, in sundry places, various abuses prevail among persons of our communion, by *promiscuous hearing*, not only of ministers belonging to churches from which we are in a state of separation, but likewise of *lay-preachers*; by our people attending public

meetings, where private persons encroach upon the business of the Ministerial Office, and by the manifest abuse of Sabbath-evening schools: the Synod agree in renewing their Act of the 2d of May, 1798, with the following corrections and amendments.

“ The Synod, therefore, agree in declaring, That, as *lay-preaching*, (or preaching by persons not invested with any ecclesiastical office) has no warrant in the word of God; no person in the communion of the Secession Church ought to countenance the public ministrations of such persons: and as this SYNOD have always considered it their duty to testify against *promiscuous communion*, no person under their inspection can consistently with their principles, attend upon, or give countenance to, the public ministrations of those who bear office in ANY church against which we have *lifted up a testimony*, in a state of separation from *her*.

“ With regard to the Sabbath-evening Schools, though the SYNOD admit, that they may be the means of doing good among the rising generation, if under proper regulations; yet the SYNOD judge, That no person in *subjection to them* can, consistently with their principles, send their children to such schools, or otherwise give countenance to them, if in these schools, discourses are delivered tending to *encroach upon the work of the ministry*; if there is such an attendance of multitudes as gives to the school the appearance of an assembly met for public worship; if any thing is done or taught in these schools inconsistent with the duty of the Sabbath-day; if the attendance of children upon these schools shall interfere with the duty of parents to instruct their own children; or if any thing in the character of the teacher gives reason to suspect the principles or morals of the children may be corrupted by them.

“ The SYNOD, therefore, humbly warn all persons under their *inspection*, against offending in the above respects: And they appoint, that if any persons in our connexion shall be found to do so, the Presbytery or Session, under whose inspec-

tion they are, shall deal with them according to the degree of their offence."

In this manner did the Established Church and the Dissenters of the Secession, chime in unison, and co-operate in concert against the Society for Propagating the Gospel at home in their measures for ameliorating the condition of the people of Scotland. And to give additional efficacy to their opposition, Dr. Jamieson, an Antiburgher Minister of Edinburgh, took up his pen to vindicate his party and published some remarks upon Mr. Hill's Journal, concerning which the latter pleasantly remarks, that "*the Doctor writes much and says little.*" Mr. Hill replied to the worthy Doctor in a sizeable pamphlet of about 100 octavo pages, entitled, "A Plea for Union, and for a Free Propagation of the Gospel; being an Answer to Dr. Jamieson's Remarks on the late Tour of the Rev. R. Hill, addressed to the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home."

The ground which the Presbyterian Dissenters thought proper to take on this occasion, in refusing promiscuous communion to English Episcopalians or Scotch Independents, was quite monstrous in Mr. Hill's estimation. It touched the string on which every movement of his soul rested, and caused all his powers to vibrate. His expansive benevolence and enlarged Catholicism led him to wish for communion with all whom, in a judgment of Charity, he could regard as Christians: and he was horrified at the idea of these seceders placing themselves "in a state of separation from every Christian church upon earth beside their own." On this subject the good man's mind as I have formerly remarked, was all awry "That a set of people, called Christians," says Mr. Hill, "and many of whom are, I believe, deservedly so called, should *give over to the devil*, by excommunication, members of their body, for merely attending the preaching of the Gospel, by ministers of different denominations, united to promote the most glorious cause which ever actuated the human mind, is to me a solecism in Christianity not to be understood."

That the Associate Synod may, in a fit of jealousy, have stretched the arm of authority a point too far in prohibiting their members from hearing these itinerant preachers, is very possible; but that they would excommunicate them for the simple act of hearing is not credible, and Mr. Hill has adduced no proof of their having done so. If they considered the preaching of these Sectaries to be dangerous, they were surely justified in warning them against it. But Mr. Hill's zeal appears to have carried him beyond all the bounds of sobriety and prudence on this point. He laboured under an unhappy error of judgment on the principle of communion, or church fellowship, which no reasoning could rectify. Like what Dr. Tillotson says of the popish dogma of Transubstantiation, "it would allow nothing to be true but itself." Mr. Hill's grand maxim was that "union with Christ is the only term of communion," p. vii. In other words, all whom he could regard as Christians he would admit to fellowship at the Lord's table, however differently minded, they might be regarding the nature, laws, and institutions of the Redeemer's Kingdom. But plausible as this may appear to superficial thinkers, it will not bear the test of examination. We do not deny that, before Christianity became corrupted by Antichristian innovations, the disciples of Christ recognized each other as brethren, and received one another into mutual fellowship. Every Christian church had "one Lord, one faith, one object of Hope, one Baptism, one God and Father of all," Ephes. iv.—they walked by the same rule—were all enjoined to speak the same thing—and rejected all human authority and the traditions of fallible men in the worship of God. The very same things were ordained by the apostles in all the churches, and the social intercourse of the members regulated by the same law of their divine master, Matt. xviii. 15-18. The bond of union among them was not any private or political consideration, but love to the truth, or gospel, in which they found all their salvation, and to one another for the truth's sake. This attached them to Christ, and to one another for his sake, and his revealed will was the

standard by which all their conduct was regulated. Then, indeed, Zion looked forth as the morning, "fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners," Cant. vi. 10. But mark how different is the state of affairs among the professed followers of Christ, since "Antichrist has scattered the power of the holy people." When Christianity became a hand-maid to the state, every thing pertaining to the worship and service of God, necessarily became secularized, and the religion of Jesus, which was designed and divinely adapted to promote disconformity to the course of this present evil world and train up his disciples in a meetness for the heavenly state, was accommodated to the principles of corrupted nature and the reigning lusts of the human mind. In all national churches the authority of Christ in his own kingdom is virtually set aside, and even trampled under foot. The man of sin sits in the temple, or church of God, changing times and laws, and arrogating to himself the prerogatives of Deity. But would Mr. Hill have the disciples of Christ to mingle themselves with these abominations, which they must necessarily do by holding fellowship with abettors of the man of sin, and giving the right hand of fellowship to such as support him and connive at his evil deeds? How monstrous the supposition! Yet it is the hinge on which all his Catholicism turns. We do not deny that the Lord has his people in the Kirk of Scotland; in the church of England; yea, in the apostate church of Rome. But shall we receive them into our Christian embrace, while they remain in such an impure connection? God forbid! There is no such fellowship exemplified in all the New Testament, nor any thing to countenance it; and it is by that rule we are to be regulated, and not by our favourable opinion of the characters of men. The Lord of glory can admit his disciples into communion with himself in the invisible blessings of his grace, whom we could not admit to communion with us at his table in his churches on earth, because we have nothing in the way of either precept or example to warrant us in doing it. And this may serve to show how egregiously Mr. Hill mistakes the

matter when he talks about excommunicating all with whom we decline to hold fellowship, and delivering them over to the devil! All this is caricature; it has no foundation in truth; it springs from an obliquity of judgment, and an imagination led astray by zeal without knowledge. Had he himself had "an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches," he would have come out from the corrupt communion in which he was, all his days, trammelled, and separated himself unto the law of his God, taking part with the despised followers of the Lamb, and patiently bearing his reproach. But to return from this digression.

Dr. Jamieson, while he gives Mr. Hill credit for not intentionally misrepresenting the seceders, yet complains of him as "blackening them with his brush, and endeavouring to expose them to ridicule." He does not pretend to deny that till of late years, the Seceders had been in the practice of swearing to the Solemn League and Covenant; but he labours to soften the meaning of the terms, *extirpate*, *suppress*, *overcome*, which give that Covenant such a bitter, persecuting form. "Even among themselves," says Mr. Hill, "the phrase is at last acknowledged to be bad, and the doctrine of persecution is now entirely disowned." "The Covenant had been swallowed in the gross, with all its *red-hot* phrases, till about three years ago," having been rejected by the Antiburgher Synod in May, 1796.

As it would afford little of either instruction or amusement to the reader to follow these worthy gentlemen in their fruitless altercations, we shall abstain from doing so. Dr. Jamieson pronounces Mr. Hill "a bigot for liberality;" and terms him "a superstitious episcopal," while the latter accuses the former of having read his pamphlet "with the wrong end up!" We may, therefore, dismiss this article with adducing the testimony of a bye-stander, an Antiburgher Minister, who thus wrote to Mr. Hill.

"Dr. Jamieson seems to me, throughout his whole book, to have mistaken the real hinge of the controversy into which he

has entered. The question is not, Whether a gospel ministry is a divine institution? Nor whether human learning, when sanctified by grace, is really useful to a minister or not? For this is readily granted by all, and denied by none upon either side. But the question is, Whether in such a season as this, when the schools of the prophets have been so long barren among all the denominations in Scotland, that the people of God were beginning to despair of a succession of faithful, experienced gospel ministers;—I say, whether in this case they are, by the word of God, absolutely confined to those that the clergy give us from their own seminaries? or whether, in case they find men of eminent parts, and eminent piety and experience among themselves, that have not passed all the stages of secular learning, or been regularly bred at College, they may, nevertheless, take these, and get them *appointed over* (the people) as ministers, rather than want the food of their souls, and a lively, searching, spiritual ministry? Indeed, the modes of Education in the best Divinity-halls in Scotland, are by no means calculated to teach men to be fishers of men. I speak from experience; and I know and have known, sundry private men who are fitter to be ministers, than most of us that have got a regular education.”

All this may be well enough as matters stand between these two controversialists; but it is to be lamented, that they should both overlook the Scriptural plan for obtaining Elders, Pastors, or Ministers of the word, which was by the exercise of the gifts of the private brethren in the way of exhortation, or teaching in the church on the Lord’s Day, according to Ephes. iv. This is Christ’s own method, and it is worth more than all the rest put together, because it is that which he himself stands pledged to succeed with his blessing, Jer. iii. 15.

“Notwithstanding all the high language of the various priest-making denominations,” says Mr. Hill, “as though wisdom and learning alone dwelt with them, and all besides were nothing better than barbarians; we will venture to assert, that all this artificial manufacturing for the ministry does infi-

nite harm to the cause of real Christianity. Such men as these never were designed by the Lord of the harvest for the sacred office, and hang as a dead weight upon the church. Holy zeal for the salvation of souls can never be expected from them. Sinners are left to perish by thousands, while these men meanly submit to the impositions and limited restrictions of the parties to which they may belong. Their sermons also being the unnatural production of a burdened mind, are too frequently just the reverse of *the word of life*. When the glorious, animating, and enlivening truths of the gospel are put into a dry systematic form, instead of being "the savour of life unto life," spiritual death is engendered thereby, and comes in upon the congregation like a pestilence. Had Dr. Jamieson duly considered the perfect inattention, and the slothful indecency, even to a degree of shameful stupor, which appears in the public assemblies of such preachers, he would have been less severe in his sarcastic censures on others, who conceive it as much their duty to affect and enliven the heart, as to enrich and illuminate the understanding. And while the Doctor, in his ironical language, is pleased to speak of that 'dull thing called a sermon,' yet if he and his admirers of the established church, choose to approve of these 'dull things,' it may, with the Doctor's and their leave, be left with us to admire somewhat more animated, and better calculated to do good to the people, and to judge that to be the *best* preaching after all, which best answers the end of preaching."

It has been already intimated that, during the summer of 1799, Mr. Hill visited Scotland a second time, on which occasion he proceeded to the Highlands, and on his return home published an "Extract of a Journal of a Second Tour from London through the Highlands of Scotland, and the north western parts of England, with Observations and Remarks," 40 pages, 8vo. London, 1800.

Mr. Hill left home on Thursday, May 16th, 1799, and proceeding by way of St. Alban's, Newport Pagnell, and Olney, spent the Lord's day, May 19th, at Northampton, where he

preached three times in the Baptist Meeting-house, the place being so much crowded in the evening that they were under the necessity of taking out the windows of the Chapel. He then proceeded to Lutterworth and Leicester, thence to Derby, Matlock, Sheffield, and Huddersfield, where he passed the Sabbath, May 26th. On the same evening he went to Halifax, and preached to Mr. Cockin's congregation, in the largest place of dissenting worship in the North of England.

Proceeding through Skipton and Settle, he paid a transient visit to the lakes of Westmoreland, and taking his course through Carlisle, Gretna Green, and Annan, reached Dumfries on the Lord's day, where he preached thrice in a large place of worship to a very crowded and attentive congregation, but whether of the Relief or Burgher denomination, he had totally forgotten. On the Monday he preached again, morning and evening. Tuesday at Moffat; Wednesday, at Peebles; and on Thursday at Biggar.

On Friday, June 7th, Mr. Hill reached Edinburgh, where he found all the city quite *thunderstruck* at the fulminating *bull* which had been recently issued by the General Assembly. And no wonder he says, that a temporary panic had taken place, since "the public must have conceived that no body of people could presume to bring forward such pointed and direct accusations, affecting even our lives, unless they had some foundation for their charges." Mr. Hill adds, in a note; "three reasons alone can be assigned for their conduct; these are, madness, malice, or an attempt to discover our treasonable plots; and the first of these reasons should seem the most probable, the Pastoral Admonition being dated on the day of the full moon!"

To enable his readers to have a full view of the charges of the enraged Sanhedrim, Mr. Hill printed the Pastoral Admonition at the foot of the page, in his Second Tour. It was ordered to be read in all the parish churches in Scotland. Having spent the first Lord's day, June the 9th, in Edinburgh, where he preached, in the morning, in the Circus, to a

crowded congregation ; and in the evening at Leith ; he spent the remainder of the week in attending some "*secret meetings*," and on Thursday preached at Dalkeith. On the following Lord's day he preached again at the Circus, and in the evening took his station on the Calton Hill, where he addressed ten thousand people. He now prepared for his trip to the Highlands, and set out on Wednesday, accompanied by Mr. Greville Ewing, passing through Stirling, Kinross, and Dunfermline, to Dundee, where they passed Lord's day, June 23d. From thence they proceeded to Aberbrothick, Montrose, Brechin, Lawrence-Kirk, and Stonehaven, to Aberdeen, preaching at nearly all the towns they passed through. At this renowned seminary of learning they arrived on Saturday, June 30th. Mr. Hill entertains his readers with a description of this place, from which I shall make an extract.

"One would suppose Aberdeen would be all over religious. Two Universities in the same place : one at the new town, the other at the old : each of them fully adequate to educate for the ministry, and to confer degrees on the learned. And according to the Pastoral Admonition, the church of Scotland must be blessed with angels rather than men ; for she finds that no seminary upon earth can furnish her church with such ministers as she will accept : those are only to be found among the *dear bantlings* of her own tuition. I believe, however, that the decayed look of their colleges exhibits a striking resemblance of the decayed state of their religion. Rome herself in her most rotten and corrupted state, kept up her *spiritual* game, by boasting of the learning and purity of her clergy. The like gorgeous boast we have repeatedly from Oxford and Cambridge, respecting the young *bucks* and *blades* they send forth for the *service of the church*. The ecclesiastical characteristics of the late Dr. Witherspoon, though himself of the established church, sets off what is to be found in the northern and southern establishments, so completely, that I much rather wish a revival of that publication from such a masterly pen, than myself descant upon the subject."

“From Aberdeen I had to lament the departure of my worthy and affectionate fellow-labourer, Mr. Ewing, whose presence was needed at Glasgow. I was afterwards attended through the Highlands by two young gentlemen of respectability from England, who are at Aberdeen for the advantages of education.”

On Monday, July 1st, Mr. Hill and his two young friends proceeded to Meldrum, Graystone, Huntley, and Fochabers. At Huntley he met with one whose character he had previously known by report, and who stole into his heart the moment they began to converse—this was *George Cowie*, the Anti-burgher minister of Huntley. Here he preached to two thousand people, in a very convenient place, walled in for the purpose. Next morning he preached in his “dear brother Cowie’s meeting-house—left that warm-hearted affectionate minister, and preached the next morning at Keith to about four or five hundred people.”

The scenery as well as the manners and habits of the people was now both novel and diversified, and Mr. Hill’s remarks and observations are no way inferior to those of Dr. Johnson in his Journey to the Hebrides. “The Duke of Gordon has a most magnificent seat near Fochabers; but it appears to me a princely mansion in a poor situation. The vale is flat and uninteresting, and the neighbouring wide-extended plantations are more wild and romantic. Tired of parading through a large suit of rooms, where nothing but the elegance and sumptuousness of the furniture is to be exhibited, one almost pities the Peer who has nothing but such artificial beauties, instead of those finer displays of grandeur which the scenes of nature present to her admirers.” “In these northern parts of Scotland, I could not but remark the length of the days. Though it was now some time after the summer solstice, yet at midnight I could see to read my pocket bible, while every object appeared but a very little less clear and distinct than in the day.”

On the 4th of July (Thursday) he arrived at Elgin, and

preached in a field to a very large and attentive congregation. He remarks, "Never did I so regret the mischief done by the barbarous hand of our rude, but well-meaning reformers, as was exhibited in the demolition of Elgin cathedral. Enough remains of it in ruins to determine that its architectural beauties were strikingly magnificent."

"On the Friday, preached at Forres in the morning, and at Nairn in the evening; and on the Saturday morning at Campbleton, near Fort St. George. The prospect of doing good in these parts is the most pleasant I have met with in Scotland. The people travel almost throughout the night, that they may reach a morning sermon. From twenty miles around, and some even from a greater distance, they flock from every quarter, and hear with a peculiar seriousness and attention; while not much less, and sometimes many more, than a thousand, or nearly two thousand people would attend, and that too in a country where the inhabitants were by no means numerous, and where the Gaelic language is in general use among the common people."

Inverness, which is reckoned the capital of the Highlands, appears to have been the extremity of Mr. Hill's tour. Here he spent a Sabbath, preaching to a large congregation at an early hour in the morning, and again in the evening to a much larger, supposed to be between two and three thousand. Here he remarks, "Though my spirits were lowered by bodily sufferings, yet I trust it was a gracious opportunity to many. I shall ever remember these stages of my tour from Aberdeen, through the northern parts of Scotland, with much thankfulness before God."

On Monday, July 8th, Mr. Hill began to bend his course towards Glasgow, by the Lakes. A traveller who has been confined to the British dominions, he tells us, will find through this country, that which I suppose will most strike and surprise him. Scotland is nearly cut through by a chain of lakes, running almost in a straight line from north-east to south-west, and through the highest grounds on the British

island. These are in some places nearly perpendicular, and in most places remarkably rugged and wild. A waterfall near a surprising spot, called General's Hut, demands the attention of the traveller. Government, during the time of the Rebellion, thought it necessary to form, what is still called, a military road, through this almost inaccessible country. Over this road I travelled. Loch Ness, a few miles above Inverness, and almost level with the sea, extends in a straight line 22 miles. It is therefore seen from end to end.

Speaking of Ben Nevis, the highest mountain in the British dominions, and which terminates one of the Loughs, Mr. Hill remarks, that "such as have climbed the summit of this mountain have had presented to their view, a prospect the most boundless and romantic. Every thing that intercepts the sight is surmounted by its height, while a great part of the prospect is the most dreary and wild; yet the broken inlets of the sea, which find their way in a variety of places through the north-west of Scotland, diversify the scene; while nothing afterwards intercepts the sight till the northern parts of Scotland are discovered. About half way up this tremendous hill is a wide extended lake, which, from the summit adds much to the surprising view."

At the foot of Ben Nevis, stands Fort William, seated at the top of a beautiful salt-water Loch, called Loch Linch. Having given the people a sermon at Fort William, Mr. Hill says, "We proceeded down this beautiful arm of the sea, affording a prospect very various and pleasant. We passed some vales, the most striking and romantic. Some Highlanders were building their cottages; and this they contrived to do without the use of a single nail or a particle of iron; the rafters and ribs were pinned together with wood, and twisted withs answered for the hinges and fastenings of the door."

I am tempted to make one extract more from this part of the Tour, and shall then take leave of it.

"With some difficulty, and much loss of time, we passed a

ferry : the boat being bad, and my horse not a little fearful, we were under the necessity of swimming him over this arm of the sea. The scenery continued the most enchanting and wild, the inlet of the sea giving it a very pleasant variety. We soon met with mountains of the most rugged and terrible appearance. The road finds its way up a narrow rocky glen, where one would suppose no road could have been formed, called the Devil's Staircase. This gives entrance into a country the most dreary and barren : not a single tree, and scarcely a blade of grass ; all a wide extended bog for many miles. In the centre of this dreary part of the Highlands, having met with such delays, we were obliged to take our night's lodging at a place called the King's House. The accommodations, however, ill suited the name of the place ; a little tea, a few eggs, and oatcakes, were our only repast. Our poor horses had neither hay nor straw, and it was with difficulty that we could procure for each of them a feed of corn at night and another in the morning, while our chamber accommodations were of a similar description. We made an early escape from this miserable habitation, which has not a single cot nearer than nine miles. And after a dreary journey of near twenty miles, came to Teyndrum, a village of some decent appearance for those parts. From thence we had to travel by the rugged sides of Loch Lomond, which exhibits scenery the most pleasing and picturesque. The Loch is twenty miles in length, and contains a greater variety of views than any other in the north. Ben Lomond, another of the highest highland mountains, looks prodigious, though inferior to Ben Nevis, as it is viewed from the opposite side of the lake, and the base of it appears from the verge of the water. They who have indulged themselves with the view from its highest point, inform us that its beauties are superior to description. A mountain standing upon the verge of an immensely wild country, commanding, at the same time, a vast extent of those lands called the Lowlands of Scotland, in general fertile and well-inhabited ; having beneath it a lake,

enriched with several islands, some of them considerable, with a number of beautiful villas, must be enchanting, indeed, except to such as are born without eyes or taste. The brutes which can graze upon the surface of such scenery, give us an idea too strikingly just of that mind which can be presented with views like these, of the dignity and majesty of the great God, and forget to adore him."

Mr. Hill reached Glasgow on Friday, July 12, where he found the tabernacle (late a riding school), not quite ready for being opened; and therefore proceeded on the Saturday to Edinburgh, where he spent the Lord's day, preaching three times, to congregations as large as heretofore. On the following Sabbath he was at Air, where he preached morning and evening; and concerning which he records the following amusing anecdote. "As it was necessary to inform the town by the bellman, of my intention to preach, the honest man did his office as directed; and on the next day, although the Sabbath, we found he was committed to prison for his *transgression*. The better day, the better deed. Nothing, in general, comes amiss as a commission to the bellman; whether it be to announce a horse-race, a puppet-show, or a sermon. Perhaps, according to the proclamation of the General Assembly, it might have been supposed he was crying up the harangue of "an artful and designing man, notoriously disaffected to the civil government." It appears, therefore, that if they could have inflicted the same punishment on me for the use I made of my poor *clapper*, as they did on the poor bell-man, for the use he made of the *clapper* of his bell, I had not been released from my visit to Air, so soon as I should have wished."

Mr. Hill's exertions in preaching were, at this time, most extraordinary, and such as few men besides himself could have undergone; especially when we take into account the numbers to whom he usually spoke, and the powerful intonations of his voice. Thus, for instance, having preached at Air twice on the Lord's day, July 21, he proceeded to Irvine,

where he gave a sermon at an early hour on Monday morning; travelled to Salcoates, where he preached at noon the same day; and in the evening preached the third time to a very serious and attentive congregation on the sea-shore. He adds, "though my spirits were this day much refreshed by the seriousness and attention of the people, and the affectionate disposition of the ministers; yet, I found three sermons on the Monday, after the labours of the Sabbath, were quite equal to the utmost of my strength." No wonder!

On Lord's day, July 28, the tabernacle at Glasgow was opened for public worship. The place was calculated to contain three thousand people. Mr. Hill preached in the morning to an overflowing congregation. Mr. Greville Ewing, afterwards the stated minister of the place, conducted the second service; the place was not only crowded, but hundreds went away for want of room. All was solemn and still till an unaccountable alarm took place, without the least apparent cause, that the building was giving away. It was a considerable time before the people's fears in any measure subsided, and before Mr. Ewing, with some difficulty could finish his discourse. The rails of the staircase giving way, some limbs were broken; but, happily, no lives were lost. In the evening of the same day, Mr. Hill preached, out of doors, to six or seven thousand people; but the unusual exertions of his voice in attempting to quell the fears of the people in the tabernacle, ill fitted him for the further exertions which such a congregation required; his throat and breast were rendered so sore thereby, attended also with a spitting of blood, that for a time he totally lost his voice. In the course of four or five days, however, he found himself well enough to proceed to Lanark, where he preached at Mr. David Dale's cotton mills, to six hundred children, and as many men and women, in a large room appropriated for the purpose of public worship. "No manufactory, in Britain, nearly equals these cotton mills for the extent and magnitude of their design. They are situated delightfully, near the falls of the Clyde.

These falls are among the first of the natural curiosities of Scotland; at all times the fall of these cataracts is heard at a considerable distance, but when the river is flooded, the roar is tremendous."

Mr. Hill returned to Edinburgh on the Saturday, and on the Lord's day morning preached at the Circus, and dispensed the communion; and in the evening preached his last sermon in that city, after which a collection was made for the benefit of the "Society for propagating the Gospel at home;" his own "despised Itinerant Society," as he calls it; on which occasion he found the people were not so frightened by the late thunders of the General Assembly as to be prevented from putting their hands in their pockets. "Why, then," he asks, "should we be angry with them? they have done the cause essential service. Investigation of our designs was all that we could have wished; and this has been most effectually accomplished by their outcry of treason and rebellion against us. They ordered every bush to be beaten by commanding their proclamation, made up of *malice* and *scandal*, to be read against us in every CHURCH; and not one of these rebels, after all, could ever be started, though declared by them to be 'notoriously disaffected.' What a calamity, that there should be such a hunt with so little success? And what must the sheriff of each county conceive of the falsehood of this clerical alarm, who attempted to make them the tools for the purposes of their spiritual vengeance, to find out—**NOTHING!**"

Mr. Hill reached his brother's residence at Hawkstone, the place of his nativity, on Saturday, August 10; where he met his wife after the longest absence since their union, and in good health. On the following Saturday he reached Wotton-Underedge, after an absence from thence of nine months having performed a journey of full sixteen hundred miles.

SECTION V.

MR. HILL'S APOLOGY FOR SUNDAY SCHOOLS, AND SPIRITUAL CHARACTERISTICS, OR SALE OF CURATES, A. D. 1801, ETC.

THE education of the children of the industrious poor—instructing them in the principles of Christianity—and initiating them in virtuous habits, was always a favourite object with Mr. Hill. Accordingly, attached to Surrey Chapel was a Sunday School which admitted to gratuitous tuition not less than a thousand children. There were numerous similar institutions in and about London; and at the beginning of the present century they were so common that few dissenting chapels, where the congregations were to any amount, were without a Sunday School. We cannot, therefore, be surprised that those who regard themselves as “the watchmen of the holy city,” *par excellence*, the clergy of the Church of England, should take the alarm at this wide spreading leprosy, and bestir themselves to adopt measures for checking its progress. Foremost in the rank of these was the late Dr. Horsley, bishop of St. David's and afterwards of Rochester; who from the first of his elevation to the mitre, inveighed against them and against itinerant preaching most indignantly. In a charge to the clergy of his diocese, delivered in the year 1790, he first sounded the tocsin and endeavoured to rouse the clergy from their supineness. He was at that time bishop of St. David's, one of the poorest sees in the English hierarchy; but having succeeded in a translation to Rochester, he came forward, in the year 1800, in more formidable array, in a second charge, and attacked the Dissenters with their Sunday Schools and itinerant preaching with redoubled fury. But not contenting himself with what he had already done through the medium of the pulpit and the press, he introduced the subject into one of his speeches in the House of Peers, in which according to his own confession he assured noble Lords that, “schools of Jacobi-

nical religion and Jacobinical politics; that is to say, schools of atheism and disloyalty, abound in this country—schools in the shape and disguise of Charity Schools and *Sunday Schools*, in which the minds of the children of the very lowest orders are enlightened; that is to say, taught to despise religion, and the laws, and all subordination: *This I know to be the fact.*”

It must be obvious to every reflecting mind, that this statement, in so far as it was credited, could have no other tendency than to draw down upon the patrons and abettors of Sunday Schools, the indignation and odium of the British government. Bishop Horsley was unquestionably a man of very superior learning and talents; and his speech was on that account calculated to have the greater weight with the public at large. But his high-church principles and intolerant zeal against dissenters rendered him a very dangerous politician, while the violence of his temper was perpetually goading him to a line of conduct in parliament so incompatible with the peace and order of society, that even Mr. Pitt is said to have frequently expressed his regret that he ever consented to his being made a bishop. The late Mr. Hall of Leicester had taken him in hand about the year 1793, in the Preface to his “Apology for the Freedom of the Press,” on account of his bitter invective against the Dissenters, holding him up as “a disgusting picture of sanctimonious hypocrisy and priestly insolence”—the “apologist of tyranny, the patron of passive obedience”—and he adds, “It is a shrewd presumption against the utility of religious establishments that they too often become seats of intolerance, instigators to persecution, nurseries of Bonners and of Horsleys.”

But this “Goliath of Gath” had not profited by Mr. Hall’s castigation; or if it had produced a momentary impression, it had now worn off, as the following extract from his Charge to the Clergy of the diocese of Rochester will abundantly evince. Thus his lordship writes :

“Still the operations of the enemy are going on. Still going on by stratagem. The stratagem still a pretence of

reformation. But the reformation the very reverse of what was before attempted. Instead of divesting religion of its mysteries, and reducing it to a mere philosophy in speculation, and to a mere morality in practice, the plan is now to affect a great zeal for orthodoxy: to make great pretensions to an extraordinary measure of the Holy Spirit's influence; to alienate the minds of the people from the established clergy by representing them as sordid worldlings; without any concern about the souls of men; indifferent to the religion which they ought to teach, and to which the laity are attached, and destitute of the Spirit of God. In many parts of the kingdom, new conventicles have been opened in great number, and congregations formed of one knows not what denomination. The pastor is often, in appearance at least, an illiterate peasant or mechanic. The congregation is visited occasionally by preachers from a distance. Sunday Schools are opened in connection with these conventicles. There is much reason to suspect, that the expences of these schools and conventicles are defrayed by associations formed in different places. For the preachers and schoolmasters are observed to engage in expences, for the support and advancement of their institutions, to which, if we may judge from appearance, their own means must be altogether inadequate. The poor are even bribed by small pecuniary gifts from time to time, to send their children to these schools of they know not what, rather than to those connected with the Established Church, in which they would be bred in the principles of true religion and loyalty. It is very remarkable, that these new congregations of nondescripts, have been mostly formed, since the Jacobins have been laid under the restraint of those two most salutary statutes, commonly known by the names of the sedition and the treason bill—a circumstance which gives much ground for suspicion, that sedition and atheism are the real objects of these institutions, rather than religion. Indeed, in some places this is known to be the case. In one topic, the teachers of all these congregations agree—abuse of the established clergy, as negligent of their

flocks, cold in their preaching, and destitute of the Spirit. In this they are joined by persons of a very different cast, whom a person of candour, of which they on their part set but a poor example, is unwilling to suspect of any ill design, though it is difficult to acquit them of the imputation of an indiscretion in their zeal, which in its consequences may be productive of mischief, very remote, I believe, from their intentions. It is a dreadful aggravation of the dangers of the present crisis in this country, that persons of real piety should, without knowing it, be lending their aid to the common enemy, and making themselves in effect accomplices in a conspiracy against the Lord and against his Christ. The Jacobins of this country, I very much fear, are at this moment making a tool of Methodism, just as the *illuminées* of Bavaria made a tool of Free Masonry, while the real Methodist, like the real Free Mason, is kept in utter ignorance of the wicked enterprise the counterfeit has in hand."

Such was his Grace of Rochester's attack upon Sunday Schools, Conventicles, Methodism, &c. &c. and as the school connected with Surrey Chapel was probably among the largest in the kingdom, it was natural for Mr. Hill to feel it, and defend himself and friends from the foul aspersions and still more foul *innuendoes* contained in it. With this view he preached a Sermon at Surrey Chapel on the 22d February, 1801, for the benefit of the Southwark Sunday Schools, and afterwards published the substance of it under the title of "An Apology for Sunday Schools," dedicated to The President, Vice-Presidents, and the Committee and Subscribers of the Sunday School Society—with incidental Remarks on the late Charge of the Right Reverend the Lord Bishop of Rochester.

The prelate's philippic had already received a very convincing and satisfactory answer from the pen of the judicious John Townsend, then pastor of the Independent Church, Jamaica Row, Rotherhithe, whose "Hints on Sunday Schools" had sufficiently exonerated the dissenters from the load of

obloquy heaped upon them by the bishop. But Mr. Hill conceived that by the opprobrious epithet "non-descript," *he* was particularly pointed at; and consequently called upon to answer for himself. Dissenters, he said, were descripts. His lordship could not refer to them: he must mean by "*non-descripts*," persons who were not avowedly dissenters. While, therefore, he gives his friend, Mr. Townsend, full credit for his vindication of the dissenters, he thinks "that the judgment of his good friend was rather warped by his principles"—but that this did not supersede the necessity of himself coming forward to defend the real character and views of the non-descripts, "who, as a body, have no objection to establishments, or to the church as established among us; and who would be heartily glad to live and die in connection with it, provided his lordship's complaint was not too just against the heathenish style of preaching adopted by too many of her clergy."

The text of the Sermon, was Acts ii. 39, "For the promise is unto you, and to your children,&c." and as the author himself admits, in an advertisement prefixed, it has no other claim on the attention of the public than as accidental circumstances may demand their notice to its contents. He comments with his usual acuteness on the bishop's logic, in telling his clergy, that "there is *much ground for suspicion*, that sedition and atheism are the real objects of these institutions," and then adding, "this he *knows to be a fact*." On this Mr. Hill remarks, "though it may seem a little unintelligible that his lordship should have "*much ground to suspect*" what "*he knows to be a fact*," yet the charge is pushed completely home, without hesitation. These "*atheistical Jacobinical hypocrites*," who deserve a halter as much as ever his lordship does a better bishopric—so soon as he has proved the charge, and surely there can be no great difficulty, if, as he says, he knows it to be 'a matter of fact:'—these abominable infidels in disguise, I say, are receiving Bibles and Testaments that they may disseminate *infidelity*, by distributing and explaining *the book of Revelation!* Does this need confutation?"

Mr. Hill has added several long notes to the sermon, of a very amusing cast, and some of them are barbed arrows indeed. For instance, p. 22, he says, "His lordship must know with us, that in the church there are not only *sordid worldlings*, but men even worse than worldlings; men profusely prodigal, who can rob the industrious tradesman by their long standing debts, till nothing but an execution can extort from the pockets of the worthless priests his just demand." Here one naturally asks, Did Mr. Hill intend to fix this odious stigma on the Bishop of Rochester *? If not, why was the thing introduced at all? But if he did, what a trait in the character of a R. R. F. I. G. Leaving this, however, a moot point, let us mark how he proceeds: "And to this list he might add a number of those, who not only take the Lord's name in vain, like the Antijacobin Reviewers, but who swear profanely; and others also who are shamefully regardless of the solemnities of the Sabbath, and who by their idle visits, frivolous conversations, and unnecessary travellings, greatly add to the wickedness of the day, with a long string of *spiritual* game-keepers in the annual lists in the newspapers."

Speaking of the lazy practice of opening the churches for divine worship on one part only of the Lord's day, the bishop had remarked in his Charge, that "the Sectaries take great advantage of this; and what is much worse, the *devil* also takes advantage of it. On that half of the day, on which there is no admission at the parish church, good inclinations carry the more pious part of your parishioners to the conventicle; and the *devil* invites those of another cast to the ale-house." On this Mr. Hill remarks, "What a pity that his lordship had not been a methodist parson! Is not this a fair specimen how com-

* This appalling supposition is strengthened by the fact, that Mr. Hill introduces the mention of the very same subject, in the body of his Sermon, p. 40, in these words: "The Bishop himself, surely, would not have us suffer a tradesman to address us a second time for the same debt. We are not in the least dread of an execution in our houses, from our Stationer's demands!"

pletely he could have adopted their style? though, to be sure, it sounds a little like taking the devil's name in vain." In a note, p. 39, Mr. Hill says, "There is not a passage in the bishop's charge which conveys to my mind an insinuation so malevolent as that which supposes the exertions of the non-descripts did not commence till the treason and sedition acts passed into a law (See Charge, pp. 19, 20). Now the design of this strange red-hot random shot is conspicuous enough. The cry of sedition has ever been made the pretext for persecution; and the alarm is now sounded that danger is just at the door. How would his lordship feel were he in return to be charged with a design to introduce Popery on the ruins of the Reformation, and to have it asserted, that his lordship entertains hopes of filling St. Peter's chair? which might easily be inferred from the mild and friendly terms which he always uses, when he has to make any Annotations on the Mother of harlots and her apostate church*. As it happens, however, his lordship is as mistaken in our chronology as in our designs: for, I believe, we can testify before God and man, that, while these acts affected us no more than his lordship, yet seeing with regret, long before that period, the infamous zeal of Paine and his associates, we exerted ourselves accordingly, and mean, by the blessing of God, still to prove our *atheism* and *infidelity* by promoting Christianity to the utmost of our power."

In conclusion, Mr. Hill expresses his humble hope, that the bishop will look a little closer into their Sunday schools, where it is supposed that he may actually find some pious, rational, prudent young men, that, with a little further education, may be fit to fill an office in the established church, "quite as well as a great number of those *dapper bucks and blades*, which are well known to be whipt through our Universities, till, sadly against their wills, they are thrust into the church," p. 42, note.

* Quere, for Apostate Church, read "*unchaste daughter*."

I now take leave of this "Apology for Sunday Schools," by remarking that Mr. Hill has been vastly more successful in vindicating the institution itself from the malevolent attacks of the learned prelate, than he has in making out his own consistency in retaining his connection with a body so monstrously corrupt as the Church of England is *upon his own showing*, or in exonerating himself from the imputation of a *nondescript*! But the grand proof of this astounding fact now forces itself upon us.

It was about the time at which we are now arrived, that an Act passed the British Legislature, entitled, "An Act to amend the Laws relating to *spiritual persons* holding of Farms, and for enforcing the residence of Spiritual Persons on their Benefices in England," 7th July, 1803. This law was intended to correct an evil of long standing and loud complaint, viz. the non-residence of the clergy of the established church; and, as may be supposed, it occasioned a prodigious sensation throughout the country. Shortly afterwards, a bulky pamphlet made its appearance under the following title, "SPIRITUAL CHARACTERISTICS: represented in an Account of a most curious Sale of Curates by Public Auction, who were to be disposed of in consequence of the Clergy Residence Act; in which the original design and probable consequences of that Law, are laid before the public: delivered in the similitude of a dream. *By an OLD OBSERVER: Motto, Veluti in Speculum.*"

The author evidently borrowed the leading branch of his title from a publication of a similar tendency by the celebrated Dr. Witherspoon, then of Paisley, intitled, "ECCLESIASTICAL CHARACTERISTICS; or the Arcana of Church Policy; being an humble attempt to open the Mystery of Moderation," &c. This smart and satirical piece was a great favourite with Mr. Hill, and often referred to by him in his Journal of a Tour to Scotland, and the other pamphlets which his tour gave rise to, as the reader may have noticed in the preceding pages. It is true, that neither Dr. Witherspoon nor Mr. Hill put their names to their respective productions, and that for very obvious

reasons; but the propriety of filiation was, I believe, never questioned in either instance. Though both treatises were, in a very high degree, ironical, there was nevertheless a manifest and striking difference in the nature of the weapon used. Dr. Witherspoon applied the *caustic*, and scarcely ever had recourse to the knife; while Mr. Hill chastized with *scorpions*. "Im-medicabile vulnus ense recidendum," was his motto. It has been said, with what truth I know not, that Mr. Hill after a time, suppressed the sale of his pamphlet, and if the fact were so, there is nothing to surprise us in the matter. There could not possibly be a more signal proof of human inconsistency than in his remaining in the communion of a church the corruptions of which he had so glaringly exposed. Not that there was any thing remarkably different in quality or kind from what is to be found occasionally interspersed in his other writings; but, in his "Sale of Curates," he seems to have collected into a focus, all the abominations appertaining to this part of the Episcopal system, and to have drawn his illustrations from *living characters*, in colours so vivid, and on canvass so transparent, that the originals were seen through, and made the victims of popular obloquy and scorn. As the actors, however, are now mostly off the stage; and there is no danger of the present generation attempting to fix the *Dramatis Personæ*; as Mr. Hill is no longer with us to dread their resentment; and especially as the evil which he so unmercifully lashes still continues in unabated force, there can be no possible harm in dissecting the pamphlet, and giving the reader, who has never seen it, a specimen of the delectable articles of which it is composed.

The author enters upon his task by informing his readers that, while lately passing a long winter's evening with a friend, the conversation turned upon the probable consequences of the Act lately passed respecting the non-residence of the clergy. After talking over the matter in all its multifarious bearings, he retired to rest, with his head brimfull of the conversation, and began dreaming about the subject

in a most extraordinary and impressive manner. He fancied himself in some considerable town, into which he beheld a large influx of the clergy, who entered it from all quarters, mostly two by two; the generality of them exhibiting such rueful countenances as he never before beheld. Some of them appeared most marvellously plump, and of an enormous size, while their glum looks were expressive of the deepest sorrow. Many others of them appeared like jockies in half-mourning. These went stamping and roaring about, as though they were half-mad, crying out at intervals, What *shall* I do? What *shall* I do? Each of these was attended by another, whose poverty-struck appearance formed the strangest contrast he ever beheld; but all the motley group seemed to be equally downcast and demure. While this strange visionary scene was before him, he fancied he heard a grave old gentleman ask a poor widow, who was selling apples and ginger-bread in the market-place, what had brought all these reverend gentlemen into the town, and whether it was not the time appointed for a visitation? To which she replied, "Why, have you not heard that the rectors are going to dispose of their curates to day by auction?" This excited his eager curiosity, and he hastened into the Auction-room, at the moment the sale was just about to commence.

The auctioneer having, with three raps of his hammer, commanded silence, then commenced his speech, declaring that though he had been engaged in the business of an auctioneer for many years, yet never before had he a sale of a nature so extraordinary as this. Even Dr. Francis Moore, in his Almanack, with all his insight into futurity, was never able by his profound knowledge of the configuration of the stars, to predict this most marvellous event. After eulogizing the wisdom of our legislative body as it relates to our political concerns, the result of which was seen in a nation whose European dominions are so small, yet spreading her triumphal banners throughout the world, he proceeds to remark, that their wisdom was equally conspicuous in their management of things ecclesias-

tical. And this brings him to the Act of Parliament lately passed, and which he had the honour of exhibiting before them that day. Having put on his spectacles, he proceeds to read and expound the preamble to the act; informing them that it related to *spiritual* persons holding farms, and was intended to enforce the *residence* of such persons on their benefices. Even the auctioneer himself appears astounded at the singularity of the thing, and asks, "Where in the world could all these spiritual persons have been running to, that it was necessary to fetch them back by an Act of parliament, in order that they may be *enforced* to take care of their spiritual concerns?" Having descanted fluently and at great length on the quality and description of the articles he has to dispose of, in doing which, by the bye, he travels not a little out of the record as the lawyers say, and gets into a kind of preachment about "grievous wolves entering among the people and not sparing the flock," and all that; he at last announces the conditions of sale, which are as follows:

1. That each rector or vicar shall put up his curate to sale, as they stand in rotation. First come, first served.
2. That each rector or vicar shall be at full liberty without interruption, to tell his own story, and afterwards to explain the qualifications of his curate.
3. That each curate shall have equal liberty to explain for himself, to his own advantage, as far as he may think fit, without let, hindrance, or molestation whatever.
4. That the auctioneer shall be at full liberty to make use of whatever free remarks he chooses, for the benefit of all parties.
5. That each curate shall be disposed of according to the terms, to the best bidder; and that they shall be taken with all faults which may afterwards be discovered, and be removed by the purchaser at his own expense.
6. That all the auction expenses shall be paid at the fall of the hammer, if demanded.

Having thus arranged preliminaries, the sale commenced.

The first incumbent that presented himself was a Mr. Meanwell, who had been in orders twenty years, the first eleven of which he was merely a curate, but nine years ago he obtained

a vicarage which he must now resign and return again to his curacy, the stipend of which was very inadequate to the support of his large family. But what most of all grieved him was, that he must resign his vicarage to make way for a young rector, who was one of the wildest creatures he ever met with. He came into the parish the other day to see about his residence, with a brace of greyhounds at his horse's heels, and one of them followed him into the church; and, while he was reading prayers, the dog reared upon his hind legs, looked all around him from the reading-desk, and attempted to jump over, when the rector laid hold of him, and, in the midst of his devotions, cried, "down, sirrah," while the scene created nothing but disgust in some, and laughter in others. His first job at the rectory was to send for the masons and carpenters one Sunday evening, to build a set of dog-kennels for his pointers and greyhounds, and to repair a stable for his hunters; and when the carpenter, having a better conscience than the rector, refused to come on that day, his remark was, with an oath, he could not bear to see people so d—— *saintish*, and that he saw no harm in settling matters of that sort when the *duty of the day was over!* When Mr. Meanwell told him how disagreeable it would be for the people who loved good order, to hear the yellings of his dogs all the time of their attendance on divine worship, as the rectory-house was so near the church; all the reply he made was, that it was *heavenly* music.

Next to him comes Mr. Flesh-and-blood, who tells the auctioneer that it is impossible for him to enter upon his story till he has had some brandy. Accordingly a bottle is sent for, and having drank pretty freely of it in its *neat* state, "he takes off his wig, wipes his steaming head, rubs his hands, and cries, Well, Mr. Auctioner, I am now ready to tell the story, as it relates to myself and my poor curate." The sequel exhibits the picture of an epicure—a gourmand—a glutton, who declares that he found it difficult to keep body and soul together on six hundred pounds a year—and he honestly confesses that "he had rather be choked than starved—plenty of

victuals and a good cook were, in his opinion, the greatest blessings under heaven." But there is a grossness in the details respecting this *Boniface*, which renders it unfit to dwell upon, and we pass it over.

Mr. Leadhead, rector of Giddyton, then presents himself, accompanied by his *spiritual Jack-a-dandy* curate. This case, like the preceding, is "too bad" to dwell upon: the curate is put up to auction, and sold to an innkeeper for a waiter, for which he was considered to be admirably fitted.

A young rakish-looking rector next came forward, though with a considerable degree of confusion and shame. On being asked his name, he answered, "Oh, Sir, my name is William Wanton, and to tell you the truth, as I have been too gay for my cloth, if I could do without my living, I would sooner give it up than go back and serve it again." The auctioneer, after some little preliminaries, drew out of this wretched creature such a dreadful long story of his most vile and wanton conduct; attended also with a detail of such different promises of marriage, only made for the basest of purposes, and afterwards as cruelly violated as are too shocking and indecent to relate.

To him succeeds Dr. Sacheverell, a political clergyman, grandson of the famous divine of that name, who flourished in the reign of Queen Anne, and who was tried by the Commons, and found guilty of preaching a seditious sermon, which was ordered to be burnt by the common hangman, and he himself suspended from exercising the function of a clergyman for three years. The grandson glories in being descended from so respectable a progenitor—a man who was a faithful sufferer in so meritorious a cause! He regards the Act of toleration as nothing better than establishing schism by law. A curious and not uninteresting discussion ensues between the auctioneer and this fiery zealot, who, though he would tolerate Jews and Turks, intimates that he should have little scruple to hang all the dissenters as vile schismatics, who endanger the church. His one grand incontestible argument

is, that it is impossible there can be a Christian church, but as it is under the successional power of Christian bishops, whose orders are equally valid, let their lives be ever so bad. "For his part he would rather receive his holy orders from the wickedest bishop upon earth, than from the most righteous among the schismatics from our holy and apostolical church*." This way of talking being a pitch too high for the creed of the auctioneer, the latter warmly opposes it; the Doctor, in consequence, loses all his patience, and began raving at such an extraordinary rate, in defence of persecution and his successional episcopacy, that the auctioneer was obliged to cut short the controversy by calling him to order, and begged he would settle the business with his curate immediately, or he would call for the next in rotation. The curate is then called, and the account which he gave the auctioneer of the conduct of his rector, is very characteristic and amusing. "When he came to visit his living," says he, "he would be preaching such a set of abusive sermons against sectaries and dissenters as drove all the people to go and hear them. With much justice, they would observe that they could not tell what good they could get by hearing the rector abuse his neighbours for their religion, especially as he was not overburdened with it himself. He would talk about the bishops and the church, in his way, by the hour. It is amazing, while he and Canon Bonner and Rector Gardiner were over their cards, how they would plead for the church, saying, that it would have been the best constituted church in all the world, if it had not been robbed of so much of its emoluments at the time of the Reformation. I suppose my rector has been preaching upon the divine right of tithes twenty times over. He would be sending me sermons to preach, and books to read, all full of the same high notions and sentiments in religion as he himself held. He was particularly fond of Daubeny's Guide to the Church,

* This speech was actually made use of by one of the high church gentry of the day.—*Author*.

and ordered me to make extracts from that book, and convert them into sermons: then again he sent me such sermons upon the efficacy of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, so very like the doctrines of the Papists on the same subject, especially on the efficacy of the Mass, and extreme unction when near death, that a Popish priest who lives in those parts actually called upon me, and supposed he could make a convert of me. He would be sending me over heaps of such pamphlets as the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, and *Churchman's Magazine*, and other books of the same stamp; and whenever I used to preach any sermons after that style, I was sure to offend all the sober part of the people, and drive them to the meetings. Oh, Sir, the mere sight of a dissenting meeting-house would be sure to put him into a passion; but it was the Methodists that he hates above all others in the town. How he would rail at them by the hour together, and with what eagerness he would report every story that was hatched against them; whether true or false, it was all one to him!"

Such is the curate's account of his rector; and as to himself, he is free enough to confess, that he had no learning, and was never intended for a clergyman. "My uncle, Colonel Lofty," says he, "who is very intimate with my Rector, meant to have brought me up for the army; but he soon found I had no taste for that line of life. I was always bent to seek after those polite accomplishments, which were more calculated to make me shine in the drawing-room, in the ball-room, and the parlour, especially among the ladies, than on the field of battle. My uncle, therefore, concluded, that though my disposition might stand in the way of promotion in the army, yet it might rather be to my advantage than otherwise in my preferment in the church. So, my rector, out of respect to my uncle, who was as great a man for the church as himself, appointed me to the curacy, till I should meet with something better. On being asked to specify a little more particularly what his accomplishments were, he thus proceeds:

"Sir, an elegant and graceful movement, I conceive to be

among the first of them. From my childhood I had a dancing master, by my mother's peculiar request. She was always very fond of me, as I was, at least in her esteem, a very handsome and beautiful child; and you know, Sir, that the elegance of the person is never so displayed as in those different graceful attitudes required in a ball-room. I know not whether I shine most in the minuet, the cotillion, or the country dance. Add to this, Sir, my ability in drawing is not inconsiderable. I have had the happiness to shine in the esteem of many of the ladies in different devices which I invented, to adorn their fans; beside this, my musical abilities are very tasty; on the pianoforte I can play with considerable execution; my touches and taste are admired by all; and as to the violin, that also I can manage in a manner superior to most. And, as to languages, if defective in those that are ancient; yet, not so in that modern polite language, the French. Sir, in all these accomplishments, I flatter myself I have all the qualifications necessary for the polite, the fashionable, and the gay."

After Mr. Prettyman (which was the curate's name,) had favoured the assembly with his speech, says the author, "I thought a very fine gay-looking lady came up to the auctioneer; and, after some conversation with him, next entered into an agreement with Mr. Prettyman, respecting his terms, which was conducted sometimes in English, sometimes in French, and intermixed with so many bows and scrapes, and such an abundance of affectation on both sides, as set all the company into laughter; and, as to myself, I every moment thought in my sleep, that this poor negative, though comparatively innocent creature to his rector, was just going to be transmogrified into a monkey. However, I soon discovered that the lady, whose name was Mrs. Prim, kept a large boarding school, and that she was dealing with Mr. Prettyman, as an usher, to teach those polite accomplishments to the young ladies, of which he conceived himself to be so amply possessed; and soon afterwards they both retired from my sight."

This is amusing enough; but the next lot which came under the hammer, furnishes some valuable lessons of instruction, on which account the reader shall have the whole scene laid before him without mutilation or abridgment.

"After the dismissal of the former gentleman, the auctioneer cries out:

"*Auctioneer.* I wish that gentleman, with his blue coat and yellow metal buttons, and bob-wig, would stand aside and make room for the clergy.

"*Gentleman.* Why, Sir, I am a clergyman; and came here on the business of the day, and it is my turn to be attended to next.

"*Auc.* But, Sir, if you are a clergyman, how came you to fly from your colours, and to dress yourself like a layman?

"*Gent.* Why, am I not at liberty to renounce my profession if I don't like it?

"*Auc.* Surely, so, Sir; but how came you to enter into so solemn a profession, when you did not like it?

"*Gent.* Ah, Sir, that has been the lot of many more beside myself; but my sceptical uncle must answer for that; and to tell you the truth, he has made me as complete a sceptic as himself.

"*Auc.* Well, but Mr. Sceptic, if I had been in your case, I would rather, as an honest man, have been a shoemaker than a parson; for a few sceptical notions in the head of a shoemaker, will neither hurt his leather or his workmanship; but when such notions get into the heads of ministers, in my opinion, they make a terrible havoc of religion.

"*Sceptic.* It may be so; but, as I said before, the sin of that must rest with my uncle; for, he, having a small living to dispose of, and being the elder brother, threw it out as a bone to pick among the younger branches of our family.

"*Auc.* But, I hope, Sir, you found a little good flesh upon the bone your uncle gave you to pick.

"*Sceptic.* Yes, Sir, the pickings of that bone amount to

about a hundred and fifty pounds a year; and for the sake of that, what oaths and subscriptions was I obliged to swallow!

“*Auc.* It is well they did not choak your poor conscience outright. But, I hope, Sir, what you have to say about oaths and subscriptions, will reflect no discredit on the rest of the clergy; otherwise I fear it will sadly hurt the credit of the sale, if I cannot make out these gentlemen to be men of conscience, as respects their solemn engagements and vows; nor yet do I know what we shall have to say of you, if you find fault with the doctrines of the established church.

“*Sceptic.* Why, don’t you remember what I told you of my uncle’s sentiments? and, as to my father, he was never guilty of the sin of thinking in all this world; so, that being first taught to think by my uncle, he directed me to think, that whatever others had thought before, was nothing to the purpose, and that I was entirely at liberty to think for myself.

“*Auc.* So is every other man in this land of liberty, though your uncle set you a pretty heavy task in the thinking way. But, pray, Mr. Sceptic, if you were not satisfied about oaths and subscriptions, how came you to think one way and act another.

“*Sceptic.* Why, Sir, I have been racking my brains and conscience a thousand times over, in order to make myself believe that I did not think one way and act another. Oh, the volumes I have been obliged to read over, of the laboured productions of the bishops, and the most learned of our clerical leaders, to see if any of their inventions would afford me such a twist for my judgment, as that I might satisfy my conscience!

“*Auc.* Nay, nay, Sir, surely you need not have taken all this trouble; for it seems, you clergy, are directed to subscribe the articles ‘in their literal and grammatical sense,’ by the compilers of our articles and liturgy; and I should suppose they knew how to write plain English and common sense, as well as ourselves. The difficulty, in my humble opinion, is not in explaining the articles but in explaining them away.

"*Sceptic.* Yes, Sir, but then they did not appear to me to mean what I wished them to mean; and you would not have had me hastily to cast away my living, for a few hard strains on that score.

"*Auc.* But, Sir, if instead of reading over the writings of all these bishops and doctors, you had candidly compared the articles and doctrines of the church with the pure meaning of the bible, you might have rectified your judgment, and saved your conscience at an easier rate; for, surely, it cannot be doubted, but that our first reformers gave themselves up to the study of the scriptures in a very extraordinary manner: and that they were men of great piety, integrity, and zeal.

"*Sceptic.* So *you* may think, Sir; but many of *us* think quite otherwise; that they were men of a very enthusiastical spirit, and were terribly warped by the dogmas of Calvin in all their doctrines. Why did they not leave us more to the dictates of reason and the light of nature; and that each of us might have a little room to think for ourselves.

"*Auc.* Why, they took all this pains, that they might instruct the clergy, 'to avoid diversities of opinions, and for the establishing consent touching true religion.' Could they do any thing better?

"*Sceptic.* Could they do any thing worse?

"*Auc.* Oh, Sir, for the credit of the clergy, you should not bolt out things in such an unguarded manner. By and by, you will make it out, that when they subscribe a creed *literally* and *grammatically*, in one sense, they *literally* and *grammatically* mean it in another. But, was it not in the power, at least of some of those divines, to give any satisfactory light into your conscience, to assist you through those turnings and windings in point of subscription?

"*Sceptic.* Yes; and a strange light it proved; for, it bewildered me more than ever. Is it possible that they should settle the judgments of others, till such times as they came to some settlement among themselves?

"*Auc.* Why, Sir, I hope you don't mean to make it out,

that they contradict and run foul of each other in their settlement of these matters ?

“ *Sceptic*. How could they do otherwise, when they had to turn about the avowed notions and doctrines of Calvin to mean just the reverse ?

“ *Auc*. To be sure it must have required some *hard straining* to prove, that articles designed to *banish* a diversity of opinions, were meant to *countenance* a diversity of opinions, and that they were to be so framed as to set forth two opposite points at the same time ; if it be proved that they have left matters *doubtful*, it never can be proved that they were to establish *consent* touching true religion, as there must of course be a *diversity of opinions* about matters that are *doubtful*.

“ *Sceptic*. Yes, Sir ; and from these principles I found I had to do my duty, in a church in which I was obliged to confess, Sunday after Sunday, that ‘ we had done those things that we ought not to have done, and left undone those things that we ought to have done, and that there was *no health in us* ;’ and ‘ that the remembrance of our sins was grievous unto us,’ while I was countenancing thereby the enthusiastical rant of many whose sentiments I utterly abhor.

“ *Auc*. Well, Sir, from your views of matters, I don’t wonder why you have changed the colour of your clothes.

“ *Sceptic*. Who, in the name of common sense, could subscribe not only to Calvin’s gloomy notions of the fall of man, but all his other opinions, which are evidently built on the former ; such as justification by faith alone, throwing all our good works out of the question ; and that other article against our notions of free-will, so far as we have any. And what stuff has been foisted into the articles on predestination and election ; on some works being done before justification, and on others being done after justification. Who, in the name of wonder and common sense, could take in and understand such jargon as all this ?

“ *Auc*. I am afraid, Sir, from what you say, that the

church has been a much greater plague to your conscience, than of profit to your pocket.

“*Sceptic.* So I have really found it; but I tried all in vain to make my conscience chime in with all the chimes that have been rung on this subject to the utmost of my power. I tried also some other classes of these modern interpreters, that, ‘the articles of religion were only articles of peace and of general consent;’ that if we were but enemies to popery, anabaptists, and every species of dissenters, that was quite enough; and further, that they were only to be understood ‘in any sense that the present governors of the church chose to impose upon them;’ so that they were actually capable of obtaining ‘a new and acquired sense,’ as the wind might tack about from time to time; and that therefore we were left at entire *liberty*, while we were *bound* down by a positive subscription to certain articles of faith, to make ‘new improvements in divinity,’ according to our own speculative views of matters; and that all the young divines were to swallow down these oaths and subscriptions on the credit of the old ones, who had gone before them. Now, to swallow all this, my conscience should be at least as wide as the Gulph of Venice.

“*Auc.* By your account, Sir, doctors differ most marvelously on these points. I think they should have settled matters more decidedly among themselves, before they had ventured to make out a settlement for the consciences of others.

“*Sceptic.* What my poor brains and conscience have suffered on this occasion, no one can tell. One bishop says, though our reformers were certainly Calvinists, yet they framed the articles with two meanings to them, for and against their own sentiments! Another says, that while they wrote the articles touching the consent of true doctrine, they may be taken on either side of the question, on neither side of the question, or on both sides of the question. Then another bishop bolts it out contrary to all who ever wrote before him, and asserts it that these Calvinistic articles are to be under-

stood as being entirely Arminian; and, that whosoever does not subscribe to these articles thus transformed into the acknowledged *vice versa* sense, contrary to the original meaning according to the acknowledgment of other bishops, ought to be kicked out of the church, or kept out of the church, all the days of his life.

“*Auc.* Why, then, upon a short review of matters, it seems to amount to this. Some suppose, that though the reformers wrote in one sense, it might be taken in another; others that they were meant in two senses, the direct opposite to each other; and a third, that the sense of them is but one, but then the direct opposite to their obvious meaning; and a fourth set have made it out very conveniently, that they may mean any thing, every thing, or nothing, as all may like best.

Sceptic. I have tried them all round again and again, and for the sake of my living I have been trying to believe every thing; and now I have brought myself to such a pitch, that I believe nothing. Till now I have got my parishioners to be content with single duty, so that I could hire a clergyman from a neighbouring church to serve both his church and mine. By this means, having but little to do, I kept my conscience tolerably easy; but now, if I was to go to my living, I must preach and pray, as though I believed every thing, when, the fact is, I believe nothing: so that my determination is to give it all up; and as I have no curate to dispose of, I am come here to dispose of myself.”

Immediately a bookseller bade for him, promising that if he would turn writer for different magazines, and other periodical publications, they might make a do of it together. The Auctioneer observed, that he had certainly changed professions for the best; and if *scores* of the same sort were to follow his example, the church would be delivered from one of those evils under which she so deeply groans.

So much for this sceptical clergyman, of whose stamp it seems there are *scores* (it is to be feared *hundreds*!) in the reformed Church of England. In a note on one part of the

narrative, Mr. Hill says, "I once thought to have made correct reference, to all the shifts and evasions brought forward by Mr. Sceptic, as they must to the generality of readers, appear too preposterous, as genuine quotations, from any serious author of the day. But as Mr. Overton's treatise, entitled 'The True Churchman,' sums up all the controversy in a point, and refers to all authors on both sides of the question, I refer my readers to that publication." In this way Mr. Hill at once strips the subject of all just pretence to the character of fiction or romance, and stamps it with the verdict of historical truth. And who can view the subject in that light, as a plain narrative of what actually exists in the Church of England, but must be petrified with wonder and amazement at his attachment to such a mass of corruption! The truth is, that all national establishments of Christianity are Anti-Christian, whether Papal, Episcopal, or Presbyterian; they are each and all constituted on unscriptural principles, and no modifications which either Mr. Hill or a convocation of the clergy, for which he sometimes expresses his longings—no nor an ecumenical council could alter their nature, and convert them into Christian churches, though there may be Christians among all of them. But such persons resemble the captives in Babylon, and the Lord's voice is calling to them to flee out of the city and deliver every man his own soul. But to return from this digression—

After Mr. Sceptic had vanished out of sight a Mr. Wildman came forward—"the same who rode his own horse against another *reverend* brother at a horse race the other day, and, according to report, the stirrup broke during the race, and he had enough to do to *swear* sufficiently loud to get the people out of the way, lest he should ride over them." He candidly owns to the auctioneer that that was one of the many tricks between him and his poor curate, whom he was obliged to part with, though he was "a delightful blade!" The Auctioneer replies, "Well, well: I dare say some one may want him for a jockey or a groom, and I am sure he is much fitter for that

than for a *parson*. But it is well you did not break your neck when you turned jockey."

"No matter, to my mind," says Jack Wildman, "if I had: for then I should have avoided all these calamities that are now come upon me; and could I have foreseen all this, my uncle should never have driven me to relinquish my inclinations for the army, for the sake of the church. I had rather have been transported to Botany Bay a thousand times, than be banished to that dreary village, where there is not a market town within eight miles of it; in fact it is one of the stupidest places I was ever at in all my life. I am sure I shall soon be hipt to death! Farewell visits to Bath, Cheltenham, Brighton—no more plays, balls, cards, routs, assemblies, and masquerades. And oh, the delightful amusements of the chase and the turf! Had I been Rector of Newmarket, I think I could have put up with it; but who can bear to live in such a horrid, dull place as that? Why, the very sight of the dreary old Rectory is enough to fill one with the vapours.—It was all my uncle's fault; for he told me when I wanted to go into the army, that if I would but take *holy* orders, after I was inducted into the living, I should have nothing to do but to pay the curate, and live upon the tythes, while I should be left at liberty to enjoy such charming free quarters, as I had at Lord Rakeshame's and Sir John Rackett's, aye, and twenty more places besides."

The curate is now introduced, than whom there is not a better judge of dogs and horses round the country. The auctioneer supposes that he will do capitally for a huntsman or groom; and asks to be favoured with a specimen of the whoop and the holloa, as though he was in full chase, galloping after a pack of hounds—"on which he shouted away in such an extraordinary manner, after the common language of the chase and the turf, as almost awakened the dreamer out of a sound sleep: he then struck up a hunting song, which he touched off with much humour and grace. The consequence was that he soon found a purchaser from a young rakish wild-looking country

squire, who had no sooner made the purchase, than another asks what he should give him for his bargain, as he was in want of such another young fellow for a groom? The auctioneer immediately interfered and said, that by what he could learn, there were dozens of the same stamp to be disposed of, and that now if the public wanted game-keepers, huntsmen, grooms, or sportsmen, of all sorts, ages, and sizes, they might pick and chuse; and that he conceived they would go very cheap, as it was his opinion they would do much better for such occupations than for the church.

“Many reflections also were made by the Auctioneer, as it related to the absurdity of supposing that such sort of ministers should prove proper drivers of different dissentients out of their parishes, while their time was thus taken up in driving after their hounds, and in driving away after every horse-race, and all such sort of sports within their reach, rendering themselves so completely contemptible in the eyes of the people thereby, and arming the cause of infidelity itself with many a weapon against the sacred cause of Christianity at large; though such sort of Christianity has no more to do with that of the Bible, than such sort of arguments in the hands of ignorant and malignant Deists have to do with common honesty or common sense.”

An angry looking Rector appeared next to come forward, whose name was Grinder: and thus he commenced his harangue, “This cursed Act of Parliament has brought me into such troubles as I shall never be able to surmount. While I was a poor curate, in order that I might better myself, I became a writer for government, and I had twice to change sides before I could obtain a Chancellor’s living. As for preaching, I confess I hate that abominably, so that I never meant to trouble myself on that head but as little as ever I could help. Still a good living is a good thing, and in my opinion, that man is a fool who does not get as much from it as ever he can. I have no notion of being squeamishly blind to one’s own interest as some are: so that after I had obtained my

living, I thought that I should have nothing to do but to raise my tithes, and live away upon the spoils, and then continue my old occupation as a writer for the government, till I could procure a still better living.

“ *Auctioneer*. And so you thought nothing of the evils of covetousness, but meant to turn your spiritual profession into a worldly trade. I wonder you did not recollect how sharply the Bible reproves the sin of *filthy lucre* in a minister, and how such are described by the prophet, as ‘watchmen that are blind, all ignorant, all dumb dogs that cannot bark, sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber; yea, that are greedy dogs that never have enough; shepherds that cannot understand, and that they all look to their own ways, every one for his gain from his quarter;’ and no wonder that such belly-god parsons as these should cry, ‘Come ye, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink, and to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.’ ”

This last speech nettles Rector Grinder not a little, and some very warm altercation ensues. The former tells the auctioneer, that it is no great proof of his civility to produce such *scraps* out of the Bible, and quote them against his conduct—that he seems to know how to exhibit as an excellent *extemporaneous* preacher while his rostrum answers admirably for a pulpit. To which the other answers, that if he were to *hold forth* against the abominable tricks of wicked priests in all ages, and among all sects, he should preach a longer sermon a hundred times over, than ever the rector did in his life.

He then enquires for the curate, and how he should dispose of him? “Instantly, a poor mean looking abortion started up, with a hump at back, a projecting breast, a pair of bandy legs, and an uncommon twist in one of his eyes; while, as might be supposed, being rickety from his childhood, he had a head sunk between his round shoulders, preposterously large, and his under-jaw projected above the upper at a considerable distance. The female part of the audience started back with affright, and the Auctioneer having interposed to allay their

years, Rector Grinder thus proceeded to expatiate on his history and merits.

"When I was presented by the Chancellor to the living, I was obliged, though sadly against the grain, to do the duty for awhile: but, however, this was no disadvantage to me, for immediately I raised the marriage fees from five shillings to half a guinea.

"*Auc.* Pray, Sir, had you any authority to take that step? I should not wonder if some poor people were to live in sad adultery and wickedness by such an extortionate demand.

"*Grinder.* Sir, I shall never lose an increased fee, when I can get one; and as to tythes, that I might know the utmost of their value, I immediately took them all in kind, though this brought on quarrels and law-suits in abundance, and it was on this account I met with my curate.

"*Auc.* It seems somewhat odd, that you should meet with your curate by quarrelling with your parishioners about your tythes. Pray, Sir, how came that about?

"*Grinder.* Why, being determined to take all the tythes I could get, even to an apple or an egg, a potatoe or a pail of milk, I found that while I was thus getting all I could out of the pockets of the parishioners, the lawyers were just as eager to pick the pockets of us all in return while we employed them.

"*Auc.* What a pick-pocket world we live in! But you must explain yourself a little further, Sir.

"*Grinder.* Why, Sir, while in converse with one of my lawyers, I found that crooked S looking gentleman as you call him, a writer in his office; and when he came with different messages, I discovered him to be one of the most cunning, deep, shrewd fellows I ever met with in all my life; and in order to avail myself of his cunning, I got the late Bishop Demas*, with whom I was intimate, to ordain him, and then I made him my curate

* Mr. Hill adds, in a note, "This bishop, I think, died about nine years ago: may we never have a successor of similar principles." Now all this shews that he was painting from real life, and not from fiction!

“*Auc.* And so, Sir, you procured for yourself a curate and lawyer by the same stroke. To be sure there was no moral evil in his natural infirmities.

“*Grinder.* Yes, and an excellent hand he has proved. He knows much more about tythe-laws than the deepest lawyers in the country; and a charming spy I found him to peep about into all the gardens, hen-roosts, and hog-styes, that I might get all I could. Since I have had my living, I have had no less than sixteen law-suits with my parishioners, and no man upon earth understood the quirks and quibbles, and evasions of the law, better than my curate.

“*Auc.* A fine character for a parson, truly; but I think you would both have acted more consistent with your profession, if you had lived more peaceable and quiet among your neighbours.—But why, Sir, should you wish to part with your curate? Perhaps you may soon have some fresh law squabbles with your parishioners, and then how will you do without him?

“*Grinder.* Oh, no, Sir! I cannot afford it; in most of my law-suits I have been on the losing side of the question. Though, while I have been a considerable loser, yet nobody has been a gainer but the lawyers themselves. As, therefore, I must return to my living, and give up the profits of a farm I hold at a distance, I am under the absolute necessity of parting with my curate.” The latter is accordingly put up to auction and purchased by lawyer Quibble, who has no objection to his shape and make—neither has the curate to return again to his former occupation, for he honestly declares that he has no more impressions of religion than had the old covetous bishop who ordained him!

At this part of the sale, the auctioneer seems to have had his patience exhausted, and cried out, “If I have nothing but such church rubbish to dispose of, I shall relinquish my place, and leave my clerk to finish the sale”—which introduces a conversation between the Auctioneer and his Clerk, who sat writing at a little desk underneath.

“ *Clerk.* Sir, according to my private list, there are yet many more of the bad ones to be disposed of; but I dare say, if you please, we can contrive to bring forward some of the good ones next; though I fear, as times go, there are but few of them: only if you could but dispose of the curate of the Rev. Mr. Toadeater, who got his living from Lord Lusting’s, for marrying one of his housemaids, because she was pregnant by one of his sons:—and the curate of the Rev. Mr. Lick-spittle, who got his living by saying and doing all that he was bidden by Samuel Gamble, Esq. One of these reverend gentlemen is a fine dashing bold blade, and wishes for a post in the army, and the other having already had something to do in the quackery line, means to propose himself as a doctor and man-midwife.

“ *Auc.* Well, well, if the bad state of the patronage of the church does not prove its destruction, I shall wonder. We well know what a horrid mess they have made of religion in France, and I am sure we are going after them as fast as we can; but when they are disposed of, who is to come next?

“ *Clerk.* Why, there is the Rev. Mr. Chaffey, who got his living by dancing about to all the plays, balls, horse-races, &c. with Sir Simon Shallow and his daughters; and then there is Dr. Cringer and his curate, Mr. Mean, who wants —

“ *Auc.* (Interrupts) Don’t tell me any more of the wants of any of them. I’ll have some of the good ones brought forward next: the room has been so crowded with the bad ones, that I am almost suffocated with the stench; reach me my snuff-box, and let me see some good ones immediately. If we were as badly furnished in the army and the navy as we are in the church, the nation would be ruined.”

The Clerk, perceiving his employer so chaffed, calls out for Mr. Upright, who came forward and had a long-winded story to tell about his rector and himself, and his parishioners who demurred to pay their tythes, and all that; but as his story is not particularly interesting, we pass it over to attend to the last piece of scenery.

A rector and his curate, attended with several others who seemed to be persons of credit and respect; and who, as it appeared, came to bid for the curate.

“*Auc.* Pray, Mr. Rector, will you favour me with your name?

“*Rector.* Sir, my name is Careless.

“*Auc.* Careless! why I think you are almost all of the careless family which we have had to day. What, am I never to have done disposing of such trumpery? I thought something better was to be brought forward before we finished. As I declared before, so I declare again, if I have not some better *stuff* to dispose of, I shall give the business over to my clerk.

“*Careless.* Why, Sir, I am not going to dispose of myself but my curate; and I am sure he is righteous enough.

“*Auc.* And perhaps too righteous for many of your fraternity.

“*Careless.* Too righteous for most of us, I honestly confess; he has quite ruined the parish by his religion.

“*Auc.* What! can a parish be ruined by religion?

“*Careless.* Why, there will be no living among them; he has made them so *saintish* and so strict.

“*Auc.* It seems then you are to go back to your living, to undo all that your curate has been doing, and to render them light and easy about matters of religion.

“*Careless.* Yes, yes, I find I shall have a fine job of it. If I could have foreseen that such a law would ever have been framed, which binds such a drudgery of religion on all our backs, I would never have gone into orders. I wonder what the bishops could have been at: one would think that they were all blind together. Have not we as good a right to be as long absent from our livings, as some of them are from their dioceses, though they have such comfortable palaces provided for their respective residence, leaving the *working clergy* to fagg at all the offices of religion, and to preach Sunday after Sunday? And pray how often do they preach?

“*Auc.* And who knows but another act of Parliament may

drive them about to preach like Bishop Paul, and Bishop Peter, and Bishop Timothy, all round their diocese; and with the same zeal that the bishops at the time of the Reformation went from town to town, and to different market-crosses far and wide? and then they will have quite as much to do as the most laborious among the *working* clergy of the day; and woe betide the Methodists and Dissenters when this event takes place.

“*Careless.* Yes, yes, but we have no notion in these days of giving ourselves all this *unnecessary trouble* about nobody knows what or why. If I could have foreseen all this, I should never have suffered my curate to drive on at such a religious rate. Why, he has established meetings in every hamlet all over the parish, where he makes his *private preachments*, and teaches the people to *say their prayers*: yes, and even on the week day, he calls all the people together at the church, to attend his evening lecture, and there you’ll hear the bell go dong, dong, dong, for an hour, as though it was a funeral. I hate people to be so over-righteous, and as to myself, I don’t want to stand a better *chance* for heaven than the rest of my neighbours.

“*Auc.* It is a pity that any of you clergy should leave the salvation of the soul as a matter of mere chance. I think I shall turn parson myself, if I can get some good-natured bishop to ordain me; and then I’ll tell you two or three good texts from which I will make my sermons: “Give all diligence to make your calling and election *sure*.” And again: “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” “*Strive* to enter in at the strait gate, for many will *seek* to enter in, and shall not be able, for broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” And further, as it respects these meetings for prayer, which your curate is so fond of, could I choose better texts than some such as these, if you want to preach against them? “Be instant in prayer.” “Pray without

ceasing.' 'In every thing, by prayer and supplication, make your requests known unto God.'

"*Careless.* I cannot conceive, Sir, that it is necessary any bishops need to ordain you; for it should appear as though you would make as capital an *extemporaneous* preacher as my curate, without any orders.

"*Auc.* I thank you, Sir, for having such a good opinion of me, and on this account I shall beg leave to present you with another text or two, for I fear you will be rather bare of sermons when you are brought back to take care of your flock. You had best put your head to work, to show the impropriety of your curate's zeal from this text: 'Be instant in season, out of season:' for every real Christian minister should *spend till he be spent in the sacred work*; and then, Sir, I think you might continue the business admirably from this text; If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

"*Careless.* And I have no doubt but that my curate would thunder out such a peal of hell and damnation from those texts for a full hour at least, till he had bawled himself quite hoarse.

"*Auc.* So, I suppose, you are pleased to caricature the pious zeal of your worthy curate in his mode of delivery. But pray, Sir, how do lawyers plead at the bar? and how do players act their part? The lawyer pleads the cause which is merely temporary, and the player sets off the cause that is entirely imaginary. Are the ministers of God, therefore, who are engaged about matters which are eternal, to give us nothing but a little unmeaning mumble of mere heathenish morality by way of a Sermon? And yet, Sir, notwithstanding all your objections, I dare say your curate has frightened many out of their sins.

"*Careless.* And suppose he has; what good can come of that?"

"*Auc.* Why, this is speaking out with a vengeance.

"*Careless.* As I speak, so I think, Sir. The world, in my opinion, would be in a state of entire stagnation, if there wer

none of those principles so vehemently preached against by some, as are generally called ambition, pride, anger, revenge, and other constitutional desires that are interwoven in our natures. Why, any body may perceive, these are the principles which keep the world in motion.

“*Auc.* And pray, Sir, what is your opinion further? Did these principles originate with God or the devil?

“*Careless.* I shan’t tell you all I think on that score; but I am sure of this, if these principles were not in *moderation* brought into practice, we should be all stupified.

“*Auc.* And so, if we are proud, angry, revengeful, and ambitious in *moderation*, it may all do very well. I did not know till now, that a *moderate* degree of evil should produce a moderate degree of good. I suppose, Sir, you can never be afraid of going to the devil when you die!

“*Careless.* How came you think of that?

“*Auc.* Why you plead his cause so excellently well, that there can be no doubt but that he must love you dearly, and that when you go to him, he will certainly allot you the best accommodations in his power. But, in my opinion, the world would be kept much more active by good principles than by bad ones; for while the former tend only to purify, the latter tend only to pollute. Will not the principles of benevolence, pity, gratitude, founded upon love, pure and holy love to God, and love to man for God’s sake, when put into action by fervent zeal, produce activity in abundance? In my humble opinion, wherever we live, we are sure to see enough of human woe to make our hearts bleed with sorrow and grief; and if in the spirit of true Christianity we can devote our time to alleviate such miseries as these, we shall not want such principles as you have been recommending to excite in us sufficient motives for activity. I question if such as are called forth to counteract evil, have not quite as much to do as those who are so busy in promoting it*.

* Such a conversation, Mr. Hill says, he actually heard in Ireland, between an officer in the navy and a doctor in divinity.

“ *Careless.* Sir, I did not come to hear you prate about religion, but to part with my curate. As matters are, reside I must, and then I may as well do the duty myself as pay the curate.

“ *Auc.* Why, as you seem to like to live at your ease, I suppose you will still want a curate, or the drudgeries belonging to your religious profession will prove a terrible burden.

“ *Careless.* Not they; no man can get through the service quicker than myself. Even when I was at the University, I could challenge many of the clergy, that I would beat them hollow in reading prayers, though I gave them down to Pontius Pilate in the Creed*: and as for my sermons, it never takes me more than ten minutes to read the longest of them. I can dispatch the whole of it in three quarters of an hour, and that comes round but once a week.

“ *Auc.* I wonder you could bear so long with a curate that did so much when it is your design to do so little.

“ *Careless.* Why, he was not half so righteous when I first took him, till he got acquainted with another clergyman of the same strict stamp, who soon made him as mad after religion as himself. But while I could live at a distance, it was no trouble to me, whatever might be the foolish fancies of religion they all had among themselves; therefore I thought they might all please themselves while I would please myself. But now I am obliged to reside there, I never shall be able to bear it. I shall soon put a stop to all their prayings and preachings, and lecturings, when I come into the parish.

“ *Auc.* These are fine resolutions, Sir, for a parson. I suppose you mean as soon as you get to your living, to scatter the congregation as fast as you can.

“ *Careless.* Aye, and the sooner the better; for, I am told there is no going to church, unless you submit to be half poi-

* A reverend gentleman now lives at one of our Universities, who has obtained the nick-name of Pontius Pilate for the same boast.

soned by a mob of Methodists and Dissenters which he has drawn from far and wide, to attend upon his *pious* harangues.

“*Auc.* But I thought the design of the present Act was to do as your curate has done, to fill the church and drain the meetings; but your plan, it seems, is to drain the church and fill the meetings.

“*Careless.* With all my heart; the more others do, the less I shall have to do. But if I should be obliged to follow and tag after my curate, in all his religious rambles, I should soon be tired out of my life. I am sure, however, that they will need none of my instructions after his; for I am told he would not let any of them live without a Bible in their houses, as far as he could help it. As for my own part, I cannot see what I can want a Bible for in my house, while I am sure to meet with one at the church*. Besides, I hear that several of my parishioners, and some of them are parish officers, mean to purchase my curate, and set him up against me. Well, well, let them have him with all my heart. They shall do as they like, and I'll do as I like; and so they may take him for a groat.”

Here ends the history of Mr. Careless, the representative of a no inconsiderable portion of the clergymen of Mr. Hill's favourite protégé, the established church. In the sequel, we are sagely instructed how it is that such doings *in the church* contribute to form dissenting bodies *out of it*. Two or three influential persons who had derived benefit from the curate's ministry, are sorely distressed at the thoughts of his removal, and they consequently agree together to build a chapel for him, where they may still hear him preach, and as he is cordially attached to them, a dissenting interest is formed in the place.

That such things often are, we know to be true; but Mr. Hill

* Such is the low ebb of carelessness and inattention to which the state of things is reduced, that, to my certain knowledge, many of these thoughtless creatures, though sent to the University to be educated for holy orders, had not even a Bible in their rooms; while others of them, when retired to their livings, had not one even in their houses; so that there is nothing exaggerated in the remark of Mr. Careless

was not so uninformed regarding the fundamental principles of dissent, as to suppose that the want of a gospel ministry in the establishment is the only basis of nonconformity. Was every pulpit appertaining to the Church of England filled by an evangelical clergyman, our objections to it would still remain as great as ever. Its entire fabric and constitution, from first to last, is a merely human device, founded on unscriptural principles, in flat opposition to the will and wisdom of the King of Zion; it is a creature of the state, supported by the state, and can any day be dissolved by the state, and reduced to its primitive nothingness. "Let the charge of making dissenters rest with them," says Mr. Hill, "who drive the people from the established church by their corrupted doctrines, and still more corrupted lives. I believe there are a thousand times more dissenters made by the bad lives of the clergy, than ever were made by the good conduct and preaching of the dissenters*." This is a point not easily settled, nor is it worth disputing. It only deserves notice, as showing how forgetful or inattentive the good man was to the true grounds of dissent, which arise out of the very nature of Christ's kingdom, as a constitution of things, spiritual and heavenly in its nature, origin, end, and design, its principles, laws, and administration—an economy totally dissimilar to all the forms of human rule†. The evils and abuses which he so feelingly bewails as marring the beauty, and detracting from the usefulness of the establishment, are not merely incidental or adventitious; they are ingrained in its very constitution as a compound of things temporal and spiritual, secular and heavenly, and must be common, more or less, to every modification of it, whether Papal, Episcopal, or Presbyterian. But, we shall dismiss this singular "Sale of Curates," by allowing Mr. Hill to tender his own

* Sale of Curates, p. 104.

† See Dr. Wardlaw's late Sermon, entitled, "Civil Establishments of Christianity, tried by their only authoritative Test, the Word of God." Sold by Hamilton Adams, and Co. London, 1833.

apology for the unaccountable *exposé* which he has made of his mother's nakedness, and his thus putting her to shame!

He informs his readers that some violent knocking at the door awoke him out of his sleep, and thus terminated his dream: on which he thus proceeds:

"I can assure the reader that my dream was not laid before the public, without some consideration and consultation, as it respects the propriety of such a step. Apologies sound mean, as the apologist seems to suppose he has done wrong and begs pardon. But according to the more correct meaning of the word, a *Vindication* of such publication shall now be attempted.

"It has a cowardly appearance, when a person wishes to be anonymous. Dr. Witherspoon, one of the first writers of the age, a minister of the established church of Scotland, wrote his *ECCLESIASTICAL Characteristics*, a satire on the declining and depraved state of the clergy belonging to their national establishment, though much less in transgressions than those of our own; and on that subject he chose to be anonymous, that people might not prejudge the cause, by a knowledge of the author. Though few can pretend to equal him as a writer: yet as far as this I follow his steps. I have, in a measure, adopted his title, and, for the same reasons, choose to be anonymous.

"I next observe, that I conceive the greatest national blessing the land enjoys, is that of the establishment of the Christian Religion. The state patronizes various forms, according to the will of the majority in different parts. We have Episcopacy in England and Ireland; Presbyterianism in Scotland, and Popery in Canada. This I conceive to be candid, as religion cannot be settled by the mandates of the state, but by the conscience of individuals, and against this no one has a right to complain, while the minority are equally protected, as is the case under the constitutional liberties of the land. All state persecutions, for the sake of an exclusive religion, are absurd and abominable. My sentiments therefore are, that the *platform* of the British national establishment is a good one; I wish for her

reformation, but not for her demolition. Out of candour and respect to establishments, had I been a native of the north, I would have been a national conformist to their established church, though there are some defects among them as among ourselves. The author believes that no prescriptive form is established in the New Testament church, though in the most undecided manner, her essential doctrines and the holy effects and consequences on our entire devotedness to God are fully revealed."

Such was Rowland Hill's view of this important matter, and most assuredly had it been accordant with truth, or the leading scope and design of the New Testament, we had never heard of Antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, sitting in the church or temple of God, changing times and laws, and arrogating to himself divine honours. If all forms of church government are alike agreeable to the Christian legislator—if he have prescribed no one established form to serve as the pattern or rule for his churches to walk by, and by which to regulate their public worship and all their social practices—if Episcopacy in England—Presbyterianism in Scotland—and Popery in Canada are equally sanctioned by the New Testament, christianity must be a very compliant religion indeed, and the King of Zion very regardless of the order of his kingdom, or the conduct of his subjects. But far from us be such sentiments concerning him—the imputation is highly derogatory to his honour and dignity; he was as faithful, as a Son, over his own house, as Moses of old was as a servant over the house of God. These unworthy sentiments run through the whole of Mr. Hill's published pieces, but they are dishonouring to the character of God our Saviour, and ought to be opposed. Having recently mentioned with approbation Dr. Wardlaw's Sermon on Civil Establishments of Christianity, I shall here introduce a quotation from that very masterly production, as being completely in point.

"It is not an uncommon sentiment, that the original constitution of the primitive church was not designed to be

permanent, but was adapted to the circumstances of its early condition, and left to be accommodated, in subsequent times, to such changes as might arise in its situation and prospects. In reply to every such allegation, we ask, in the first place, Has the great Head of the church, in any part of the inspired record of his will, given us even the remotest hint of such an intention? Where is the sanction for such an innovating interference?—with whom is this sanction lodged?—to what extent does it reach? Unless the divine permission can be pointed out, or something can be shown in the constitution of the Church which implies or necessitates it, we cannot but pronounce every liberty of the kind a *profane* usurpation, an intrusion into the province of Christ himself. But neither can the permission be produced, nor any such necessity established. The idea, indeed, of the necessary accommodation of ecclesiastical institutes to varying circumstances, has had its origin entirely in misconceptions of the nature of the church of Christ. Had the meaning of John xviii. 36, ‘*My kingdom is not of this world,*’ and of New Testament representations generally, been understood and kept in mind, the thought of such necessity could never have suggested itself. What was the state of the fact, even in what Paul calls ‘the beginning of the Gospel?’ There was, in the very times of the apostles, a vast extent of country, throughout which organized societies of the faithful, called, in the New Testament, churches, were formed, and this wide territory embraced no inconsiderable diversity of external situation and of civil polity. Was there, then, in those days, any accommodation of the constitution of the kingdom of Christ to this diversity? And if there was no such thing then, is not this simple fact sufficient to show that there is no need for any such thing now? The peculiar nature of this kingdom continues the same, in all ages, and in all places, and under every form of civil government. Its subjects, every where, are those who have been born again, and ‘chosen out of the world.’ Their spiritual character and their spiritual relations are altogether unaffected

in their great distinctive features, by variations, however wide in local situation and climate, in national manners, and in the institutions and forms of political society. It follows therefore, that the same statutes which are suitable for a part of the subjects of the kingdom, must be equally suitable for the whole, without distinction of time or place. The same laws will answer the same descriptions of character. The same ordinances will cherish the same spiritual principles and affections. The same moving and regulating powers will impel and direct the same machinery. The same cement will hold together the same materials. If, indeed, the church is made to embrace entire civil communities, composed of the most heterogeneous characters, under the common designation of Christians—then the necessary change and accommodation cannot but be apparent and felt. But if the church is regarded as composed of spiritual men—men who, though in the world, are not of the world—the same constitution of government which was adapted to its spiritual character in the days of the apostles, will be no less suitable for it now. This leaves us with only one question—What was the apostolic constitution of the Church? That is our only safe, our only legitimate model; and in determining it, approved example and explicit precept are of the same authority. Wherever we find the former, we in effect find the latter, unless we are prepared to admit that the apostles either enjoined what they did not intend to be practised, or saw practised, with their approbation, what they had not enjoined*.”

I do not produce this extract from Dr. Wardlaw as containing any novel principle or point of doctrine, for in fact it is recognized and acted upon by all consistent and well-instructed dissenters, and exhibits in a short compass the fundamental ground of difference between the conformists and non-conformists. I introduce it in this place because Mr. Hill

* Sermon on Civil Establishments, &c. p. 9, 10, 11. To this author we would apply an ancient saying, “Thou art not far from the Kingdom of heaven!”

while living entertained a high opinion of that divine's talents and judgment, to which he has borne honourable testimony in the Preface to his "Village Dialogues." And I will, on the subject under consideration, adopt his own words (when speaking of Dr. Wardlaw's Refutation of Socinianism) with a trifling variation, and say, that in his Sermon on Civil Establishments of Christianity, "the learned writer on the other side of the Tweed, has favoured the world with such a luminous exhibition of the nature of the kingdom our Lord Jesus Christ, as distinguished from the Jewish theocracy—the kingdoms of this world—and all civil incorporations of Christianity, as ought for ever to silence the advocates of modern episcopacy, and presbyterianism also—for his principles and arguments are such as fair and honest controversy can never evade."

The Christian religion is beyond all doubt the greatest blessing which any nation under heaven can enjoy; but its establishment by human laws is a very different affair, though Mr. Hill dexterously confounds them, in the beginning of the extract lately adduced from his Sale of Curates. The truth is that before Christianity can be accommodated to the purposes of civil government, so as to become a handmaid to the State, and suited to any whole nation of this world, it must be essentially corrupted from its primitive purity. It was never designed for any such purpose by its Divine Founder, and all attempts to convert it into such a scheme of things are highly profane and wicked. For three hundred years after the ascension of its Divine Founder into heaven, it made its way in the world, in spite of all opposition from "the Kings of the earth and its rulers," who took counsel against it, and by every possible means endeavoured to extirpate it; but it prevailed by its own intrinsic evidence and the overruling providence of its great author. The moment it became incorporated with the state, in the days of the Emperor Constantine, it gave birth to the kingdom of the clergy, and brought to maturity "Babylon the Great, the Mother of

harlots and abominations of the earth; the habitation of devils, the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird," as foretold in prophecy, and exemplified (in part) in Mr. Hill's Sale of Curates. All that the religion of Jesus Christ asks for, at the hands of the rulers of this world is, simple toleration. This heavenly stranger asks not the aid of the puny arm of flesh, and scornfully repels every effort to uphold her and further her interests by Acts of Parliament, or the decisions of Councils and Synods. If persecuted in one city or country she meekly retires to another; but is everywhere the object of hatred to an unbelieving world, agreeable to the declaration of the Saviour in his intercessory prayer for his despised disciples: "I have given them thy word, therefore *the world hateth them.*"

Mr. Hill was avowedly a firm friend to toleration: "All state persecutions, for the sake of an exclusive religion, he pronounces absurd and abominable," and so they are. But then, unhappily, he overlooked this fact, that *all* national establishments of religion are *exclusive*, and as such carry in their bosom the seeds of persecution. It is so in the church of England, "the *platform*" of which he was quite enamoured of, wishing only for its reformation, not demolition. Now, any one who will give himself the trouble to reflect upon the matter may see that if a dissenter in England would enjoy the benefits of toleration, he must pay for them by a sacrifice of property or conscience. The State selects a certain number of clergymen to officiate about the altar, whose support is provided for by Act of Parliament. It is not at the option of a dissenter whether he will contribute to the support of these clergymen or not. However averse he may be to national establishments, as being in their nature Antichristian, the civil power secures it, and the application of this power is often necessary before that support can be obtained. But whether the contribution be granted voluntarily or not, the power of demanding the payment exists; and it should never be forgotten, that it is the very same power which at one

period can demand a part of his property to support the religion of the State, that, at another could imprison his person for attending a conventicle, and which still, in another quarter of Christendom, can drag him before the tribunal of the Inquisition to atone for the errors of his faith, by the forfeiture of liberty and life. The power is radically the same, though it is susceptible of modifications from the civil government, and though there are various forms and degrees in which it is exercised. But it is time to attend to Mr. Hill.

“As a friend, therefore, to the established religion of our country, the Old Observer writes this his short apology with a free declaration against her defects. Her ministers, in a religious point of view, are very carelessly educated for the sacred work. In this she is either the tool of the state (and courts are seldom disinterested and uncorrupt) or the paymaster general to the younger sons of the noble or the rich: and the people must pay them, while others choose them. He therefore delivers his sentiments in a few words. He is, all things considered, for a reduced episcopacy, a reformed liturgy, and the election of the minister by the suffrage of the people.

“These, however, are but mere aphoristic observations, and candid minds may dispute a long time on these subjects, provided that positivity and bigotry give way to moderation and love. Under these principles, the Old Observer has sent his dream to the press, with sincere regret, that under the constitutional defects of the government of the Church, which every Ash Wednesday she laments till Ash Wednesday comes again, many very bad ministers, from motives that are most abominable, have an easy inroad into her sanctuary, and like Hophni and Phineas, though under an immediate theocracy, have reduced the priesthood thereby into a state of the completest degradation and contempt.

“Every succeeding Hophni and Phineas, therefore, in all future ages and churches, will be an equal curse to the sacred cause; the preacher’s sins are preaching sins; to palliate their vices, is therefore to stab the sacred cause to which they

lay claim, for no other motives than those which are the most mercenary and vile. When such are exposed, and brought into contempt, we should rather expect the thanks, than the blame, of those who are upright and sincere. Still the charge will be brought in the gross: "This is exposing the clergy." This is speaking against the clergy. The charge is an unjust one. The office is the most useful and creditable a man can fill. The real friends of the office will be jealous of its honour. The glory of the magistrate is the uprightness of his character, while knavery is his disgrace. If the clergy have a *right* to live inconsistent with their characters, it may be *wrong* to expose them; while after all, it is utterly impossible to *expose them*, but as they *expose themselves*. How shall we ridicule a character that is upright and sincere? and if it be attempted, the ridicule is sure to recoil, with redoubled force, against the man who makes it. In a faithful minister, uprightness of conduct is like a suit of armour, perfectly compact; and when brightened by holiness and devotedness to God, he shines with a splendour which is peculiarly his own. And blessed be God that some such characters are to be found in our national church; while many others, if less splendid, are still highly honourable and respectable, in a moral point of view; yet is it not to be lamented that some of these, though good themselves, do but little good notwithstanding? Should the cause be inquired into, perhaps the discovery might be made, that the remedy of God's own providing is not sufficiently held forth. Nothing can prove effectual to the salvation of the sinner, but that which is revealed to man, through him who is 'the way, the truth, and the life,' and when these glorious doctrines are clogged with an intermixture of human merit, or something like it, conjoined with worldly prudence and the fear of man, they are rendered without effect. The simple preaching of the cross of Christ, ever did and ever will appear 'to them which perish foolishness, while to them that are saved it is the power of God.'

“Carnal reasoning is always ready to start the old objection, ‘Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?’ while every real Christian meets the detested thought with holy abhorrence: ‘God forbid: how shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?’ Free redemption through the blood of Christ, is a doctrine inseparably connected with our free sanctification, through the divine operation of the Holy Ghost. I drop this hint with the highest respect to those who, though well intentioned in themselves, yet still fail in the salvation of others; and let this respectable class of ministers be ever mentioned with honour and esteem, and never blended, I fear I may say, with that large majority, who are negative at the best; hiding their talents (if they have any) like the unprofitable servant in a napkin, while others of them, I am persuaded, are not less wicked and abominable, than as they have already been represented. Still it should be acknowledged that these are strictures on *general* characters, and consequently not to be esteemed as *personal* reflections. A mirror is now before them, *Veluti in Speculum*. It seeks neither the applause of the good, nor fears the censure of the bad, but leaves each character to form correct judgment for itself: notwithstanding, as characters have been in general drawn, many will censure. Would to God, for the sake of others, that I had over-reached the mark; but to prove I am not singular in my judgment, I lay before my readers a quotation, from one of the best writers of the present day.

“Much has been said of late upon the subject of schism, as well as enthusiasm; and truly serious persons, who abhor both of these in their evil sense, have been charged with maintaining or abetting them. But the charge is misapplied and should have been directed elsewhere. Those are the worst *Schismatics*, the real and most dangerous dissenters from the doctrine, and the greatest disgrace to the discipline of the church of England, who, while they profess to be its ministers and members, do most strenuously contradict, by evil life, or heterodox principles, the fundamentals of the Christian Religion, and pervert

the true end and purpose for which our own, or indeed any other, establishment was protected by secular laws. Idle and dissolute clergymen, who (one must say with regret) are to be found in every place of worldly entertainment, and almost in any place rather than in their duties and churches, where the service seems to be often tedious and burdensome; the loose, the ignorant, the unprincipled laymen, professing at the same time to be members of the church; these, and these chiefly, are the grand *Schismatics* and *Enthusiasts*, the ardent and persevering enthusiasts in the pursuits of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and should be altogether the first objects of episcopal care, and of episcopal amendment. Serious and considerate people look at the *use* and *result* of things; and if they are led to lament, that the sacred offices are filled by men, not selected for their worth or their piety, but from worldly or political motives only, and that, therefore, the duties of religion are huddled over as matters of dry and unimportant concern, or are regarded mainly for the purposes of secular interest; how can they be blamed, if, turning from such persons with the same disgust, which would have expelled them in a moment from the primitive church, they resort, if they have opportunity, to more worthy pastors in the establishment, or even out of it, if no such pastors are at hand? Can it be expected, that persons really concerned for truth and salvation, will listen to the voice of the fox-hunter, the gambler, the sordid worldling, or the openly profane? The voice of such strangers to truth and godliness they will not, they cannot follow. These, *whose chief God is their belly*, are the worst enemies both of the cross of Christ, and of the excellent (!) establishment to which they claim to belong. No wonder, then, that, in a thousand instances, the laity contribute to the support of such men with reluctance, while they observe that, not the souls of the people unhappily committed to their charge, but their own miserable indulgences, are the main points of sedulity and concern. It is with a very ill grace, therefore, that ministers of this stamp complain of the increase of dissenters. They themselves are the principal

cause of that increase. For, though unity is certainly a most desirable thing, there can be no real or sincere unity without the bond of truth. This alone can influence the heart into the love of God, and the life into goodness and usefulness among men. To insist, therefore, upon religious unity with wordly, graceless, ungodly men, is almost as strange as an algamation of fire and water, or the attempt to form an indissoluble texture by a rope of sand. The true way to reduce sects and parties is to exceed them in all zeal and duty; or as a bishop of our church once recommended to a complainant against dissenters to ‘out-preach them, out-pray them, and out-live them.’ This would reclaim many, and prevent, under God, that much to be feared dissolution of our ecclesiastical state, which ungodly men in the church, and unprincipled men out of it, are hastening on, as fast as in them lies, and in some instances, with a kind of wicked and malignant joy. I say all this with the deepest concern; because I will yield to no man in zealous attachment to our constitution both of church and state*.”

I now take leave of this singular performance, “The Sale of Curates,” with merely remarking, that, had it proceeded from the pen of a Paine or a Carlisle, or any other noted infidel; nay, had it issued from some red-hot zealot of the Antinomian school, such as was the late William Huntington, or any of that stamp, it had created much less surprise, and had possessed fewer claims to notice; but emanating as it did from one who gloried in being a minister of the church of England, and who occasionally vented his spleen against dissenters, because they were dissenters, yet has done more to exhibit its deformities and expose its corruptions than any other writer living or dead; these things surely entitle it to peculiar attention. The scarcity of the pamphlet also and the consequent difficulty of meeting with it, have each had their influence in eliciting this extended analysis of its contents, for the benefit of posterity, to whose serious consideration it is now submitted.

* *Charis* or Reflections on the Office of the Holy Spirit.

SECTION VI.

MR. HILL'S STRENUOUS EXERTIONS TO PROMOTE THE CAUSE
OF VACCINE INOCULATION, A. D. 1806.

THE present Section shall be devoted to the purpose of exhibiting Mr. Hill in the character of a philanthropist, exerting all his physical energies and great influence in counteracting vulgar prejudices, and in mitigating the miseries of human life. The subject is in itself interesting, and the labours of Mr. Hill in relation to it, are so creditable to him as a man and a Christian, that it would be unjust to his memory to omit the mention of it in this place. But to make the matter intelligible to every reader, a little previous explanation will be necessary.

The Small Pox, after maintaining its frightful ravages throughout Europe for nearly a thousand years seemed to bid defiance to the skill of the physician, when, towards the close of the last century, the Providence of God which continually watches over the life of man, which first caused the polar direction of the magnet to obtrude itself on one who was at the instant in quest of a very different inquiry, and thus paved the way for perfecting the science of navigation; the same divine interposition to which we owe our knowledge of the salutary virtues of the Jesuit's bark, and a thousand other important discoveries in chemical science, was pleased to direct to a remedy for checking the progress of this direful scourge of our species. In the year 1796, Edward Jenner, a physician residing at Berkeley, near Gloucester, first applied to the arm of a healthy boy of eight years old, by means of two superficial incisions, the morbid fluid secreted by a score on the hand of a dairy-maid, who had contracted cow-pock from the udders of her master's cows. The experiment succeeded beyond expectation: the boy sickened on the seventh day after the

operation nad uneasiness in the arm-pit—on the ninth became chill, had head-ache, lost appetite, was otherwise indisposed and spent a restless night; but the following day was free from complaint. Dr. Jenner prosecuted his experiments at intervals for two years, and in 1798, laid the result before the public in his *Inquiry*, &c. a book which on account of the singular facts which it announced, and their more extraordinary application, attracted much attention. Such was the origin of Vaccination in this country, the practice of which is now become almost universal among us; but to prosecute the history in detail, from that period to its establishment, however interesting, is beside my present design, further than as the biography of Mr. Hill stands connected with it.

Dr. Jenner's place of residence was in the vicinity of Wotton-Underedge, where Mr. Hill passed his summer months, and this, together with his intimacy with Dr. Jenner, gave him the most ample means of making himself fully acquainted with the progress of this new discovery, which his natural sagacity and inquisitiveness would prompt him to watch with an eagle's eye, while his instinctive benevolence would not suffer him to remain a mere passive spectator of what was in progress. After an interval of twenty years, the public have forgotten the violent opposition which the practice of Vaccination had at this time to encounter from some of the medical profession, particularly Drs. Moseley, Rowley, and others, who strove, by every possible means, to practise upon the public credulity, and raise a vulgar prejudice against it. This led Mr. Hill, in 1806, to publish a small piece, 72 pages, 12mo., entitled, "Cow-Pock Inoculation vindicated, and recommended from matters of fact:" dedicated to His Excellency the Duke of Bedford, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. President of the Royal Jennerian Society. An advertisement prefixed gives the author's reasons for taking up the subject, and as it is short, I shall here lay it before the reader.

"It is readily acknowledged, that nothing new can be advanced on a subject which has already been so fully investi-

gated, and so ably defended by many gentlemen of the highest respectability in the medical profession: yet having been frequently requested to add my testimony to that of others, for the following reasons I readily comply: 1. I have it in my power to speak to matters of fact, perhaps more so than many among the most active of the faculty themselves, having inoculated nearly five thousand subjects with my own hand, exclusive of many more that have been vaccinated between Dr Walker and myself, at the School Room of Surrey Chapel, under the patronage of the Jennerian Society. 2. It appears that a small publication in a concise and plain style, and at a low price, containing an abridgment of what has hitherto been published, was greatly needed for the general good. 3. As a mere hint from the pulpit in different places, has frequently produced some hundreds of *customers*, from a kind persuasion that I could have no self-interested motives whatever, I wish to try what next can be done from the press: and as I am told my name has had some influence over the minds and prejudices of many, I am in hopes that I may be able to prevail with others, to resist the stratagems of a few interested and artful men, against such a weight of authority and evidence, as perhaps was never resisted before."

Mr. Hill commences with a brief account of the operations and convictions of his own mind in reference to Vaccination, on which he says, "When first the advantages of the Cow-pock Inoculation became the subject of serious investigation, I confess I was not a little staggered that so slight an infection, so safely and so easily communicated, should prove a protection against one so dangerous, so loathsome, and so destructive to the human race; but having the honour, and such I really call it, of a personal acquaintance with that skilful and able physician, Dr. Jenner, from his known integrity and ability, a strong prepossession in favour of a discovery promoted by him, naturally took place upon my mind.

"Dr. Jenner, with his accustomed modesty, takes not the least praise to himself as having brought to light any new

discovery, that the cow-pock secured from the small-pox, even to the latest period of life, when caught from the animal among those who are engaged in dairy-farms. If, however, as far as this, nothing new is to be attributed to Dr. Jenner, yet all the honour and credit of communicating the same disease by the lancet, from one human subject to another, and with the same beneficial consequences in every point of view, must be entirely ascribed to the assiduity and attention of that physician alone; whereby the lives of millions throughout the globe have been protected from one of the most fatal and pestilential diseases that can be known among the human race.

“A discovery of such magnitude well deserved the sanction of the legislative body, who granted a reward (perhaps much inferior to its importance) of ten thousand pounds. And, in order to give the utmost publicity to this most beneficial discovery, a Society was afterwards formed, and readily sanctioned by Royal authority, and received the immediate patronage of the first personages of the land. Considering myself also as a member and director of the Royal Jennerian Society, and whose medical council contains a list of names of the first respectability in the medical line, I at once conceived it my duty to promote the discovery to the utmost of my power. The ground I took I was now sure was both rational and substantial, and plain before me; and I immediately discovered that after *a very few cautionary observations* on the mere communication of the disease, and a knowledge of the proper formation of the cow-pock pustule, any person with a steady hand, though totally ignorant of every branch of surgical or medical knowledge, might commence as safe and as complete an inoculator, as the first surgeon or ablest physician in the land.”

Mr. Hill then proceeds to give a statement of what he himself had done as an inoculator for the good of the public. “My first efforts,” says he, “commenced early in the summer of 1804, in and about Wotton-Underedge, in Gloucestershire, where I possess a retired habitation: that neighbourhood being

rather populous, I had near twelve hundred applicants. At Hillsley, a village about three miles from the place, the small pox began to make its appearance: one person, I am told, fell a sacrifice to the disease, and another did but just escape with his life; this drove hundreds to me for protection, and the small-pox was immediately non-existent in those parts; and I solemnly protest that not a single sore arm, dangerous eruption, or any other calamity was heard of from that quarter. A very slight abscess was formed on one child's shoulder, which was soon brought to suppuration and healed of itself; and if this solitary instance should be supposed to operate against vaccination, I can, on the contrary side, positively assert, that after having inoculated a woman with an ulcerated breast, and her child of a very scrofulous habit, though the disease had a much stronger effect upon their constitutions than in most other cases, yet in the progress of the cow-pock, the disease began to abate; and soon after, both of them were restored to health, and have continued so ever since."

Being called to Portsmouth, in the course of the summer of 1804, on an exchange of pulpit services with his friend Mr. Griffin, who was desirous of introducing vaccination into that neighbourhood also, Mr. Hill attempted it on many subjects, but to his surprise he failed in every instance, owing, as he afterwards ascertained to the vaccine matter which he had preserved at Wotton-Underedge having been too much exposed to light and air, which destroys its influence on the constitution. In the autumn of the same year, while on a visit to Bristol, he vaccinated hundreds with the most entire success. On his return to London, some people from Clapham applied, and he inoculated eighty with his own hand, thus putting a stop to the ravages of the small-pox. In the following year, 1805, being on a visit to Chatham, he found the small-pox making dreadful ravages throughout Rochester, Chatham, and Stroud—three towns forming one continued street, extending upwards of two miles in length, together with crowded courts and other contiguous places, rendering the population the most

numerous of any town in Kent. Here Mr. Hill set to work in good earnest, beginning with two recruits belonging to the corps of Royal Marines, who had never had the natural small-pox. "With these two recruits," says Mr. Hill, "I immediately set to work, and having appointed the people to meet me at three different places of worship, as being the most commodious for my purpose, in the three towns I inoculated three hundred and twenty subjects within two days. After this, vaccination became general among the medical men in those parts; and some of them, to please the ignorant, added to the infection which already prevailed by inoculating with the small-pox—this, however, put the cow-pock inoculation to a further trial, and all who were vaccinated resisted the contagion in every quarter."

After this, Mr. Hill paid a visit to Frome, where his friend, Mr. Sibree, was anxious to introduce the benefits of vaccination. At that time the small-pox was very fatal in those parts; and at Shepton-Mallet, distant about ten miles, not less than seventy had lately fallen victims to that disease. Here however, he found he had enough to do to encounter the prejudices of the people, of which he gives his readers some delectable specimens, on which I may not dilate. In his sermon on the Lord's day, he took occasion to recommend vaccination from the pulpit, and on the following morning, in the course of two hours he inoculated not less than two hundred; this was owing to the overseers of the parish sending the bell-man about to announce his willingness to vaccinate every person that chose to apply. The minister of Shepton-Mallet, now sent a pressing invitation to him to come and extend to them the benefits of vaccination also, with which he complied, considering it a call of humanity, the inhabitants having been great sufferers from the small-pox. Here he instructed Mr. Priestley, the minister of the place, in the use of the lancet, and inoculated as many as he conveniently could. On this he remarks: "It is astonishing, notwithstanding all these efforts, what an abundance of mischief is done, by a variety of false

reports, which are circulated among a set of low quacks and apothecaries, throughout the kingdom at large, one instance of which I will now relate.

“ During my visit in those western counties, I called on a highly respectable vice-president of the Somerset Jennerian Society, who put into my hands a Bath newspaper, containing a list, as far as I can recollect, of not less than twenty who were subjected to the small-pox after vaccination; signed John Bush. I do not at all wonder that persons, even of high rank and considerable understanding, are much staggered at such advertisements; especially while ignorant of the quarter whence they proceed. On a visit to Bath, I called on Mr. Creaser, a surgeon of eminence, and inquired about the above said John Bush; and the information I received was, that he was once a cow-doctor, afterwards availed himself of a quack medicine, whereby he became a *noted* curer of cancers; and as a proof of this, I remember a friend of mine put herself under his care, and soon afterwards she was put into the grave. An inquiry was instituted, and the result was, that the whole of the *cow-doctor's* advertisement was a notorious imposition upon the public credit. N. B. The *cow-doctor* is a great inoculator for the small-pox; he takes but five shillings for the operation, but then every one knows there are some *precious pickings* which are sure to follow throughout the whole of their attendance on this terrible disease.”

Mr. Hill concludes the account of these his western attempts, by giving extracts of two letters from Frome; the first from Edward Griffith, Esq., dated Feb. 7, 1806; and the other from Mr. Sibree, dated April 1, same year; assuring him of the most complete success having attended the practice of vaccination in that populous town.

He next adverts to what had been done during a summer's excursion into South Wales. “ While in Pembrokeshire, I inoculated nine hundred and ninety-six; and having taught others the use of the lancet for the same beneficial purpose, I availed myself of their assistance, and consequently may add,

I believe, another hundred to that list, making up eleven hundred in the whole. Thus, the poor people, in and about the neighbourhood of Haverfordwest, being one of the most populous parts in Wales, are mercifully secured from a contagious disease, which would very probably have soon made its inroads amongst them: while no less than three hundred in the town of Carmarthen, at a distance of about thirty miles from Haverfordwest, were carried to the grave the victims of that awful plague."

Not having received any tidings of the result of his operations in Wales, at the time of writing his pamphlet, Mr. Hill addressed a letter of inquiry to Dr. Meylett, of Haverfordwest; he received the following reply:—

"DEAR SIR.—The small-pox has not lately made its appearance in this neighbourhood. I have seen numbers who had been vaccinated by you, and had gone through the disease in a regular manner, but met with only two cases of eruptions after vaccination. One child had an eruption some time before he was vaccinated, which had disappeared, and returned again after that disease; but it was trifling, and soon perfectly removed. The other also very soon recovered, although he had a constitutional tendency to cutaneous eruptions. There has been no one in this country who has had the small-pox after vaccination; nor have I observed any other disagreeable symptoms follow the complaint, except those two above mentioned.

"I have no doubt that your book will be of great service in removing prejudices against this most valuable of discoveries, and I sincerely wish you success in your benevolent efforts to support its credit, and extend its benefits.

"W. G. MEYLETT.

"Haverfordwest, March 11, 1806."

Having detailed the various exertions which he had made to forward the cause of vaccination, Mr. Hill proceeds to give his readers a specimen of the opposition which was raised against this invaluable discovery from certain medical prac-

tioners, who appear to have thought that "the craft would be ruined by it." "When I first began this little work," says Mr. Hill, "Dr. Rowley was then a living opponent; his book, however, yet lives, to promote the destruction of multitudes, though he himself lives no more; as for Dr. Moseley's pamphlet, one would have thought it must soon have destroyed itself. The reader shall see with what mere insolence and disgusting levity he begins his work. 'In the year 1798, the COW-POCK *inoculation* MANIA seized the people of England, *en masse*. It broke out in the month of April, like a symptomatic eruption of nature; the planet Mercury, the delusive author of vain and fond imaginations, being then in the Zodiacal sign of the Bull. It increased as the days lengthened; and at midsummer, large societies of the medical profession, which was first attacked, were distempered to AN INTOLERABLE DEGREE. While some members of these distinguished bodies were absorbed in deep study and intense thought, the MANIA stole upon them, taking advantage of the *absence of their intellects*.' And, gain; soon afterwards he gives us another sample of the same silly pedantic style of writing:—'The cow-pock has lately appeared in England. This is a new star in the Æsculapian system; it was first observed from the provinces. It is so luminous there, that the greasy healed hind feet of Pegasus are visible to the naked eye. The hidden parts of that constellation, which have puzzled astronomers as to the sex of Pegasus, and which Hipparchus, Tycho, Hevellus, Flamstead, and Herschel could never discover; the reason is evident.' We have many *flourishes* of the like sort; but when the reader has had one sentence out of the next paragraph, he will say he has had quite enough: 'some pretend that a restive greasy-healed horse will kick down all the gallipots of Galen.' Was ever such mere rhapsody and nonsense against the whole body of the most respectable, dispassionate, and wise, among the medical characters, produced before!!! And what is here given, is only a sample of the same language, as is, or has been adopted by the few others who have appeared

as the champions of the same cause. Their puffing pretensions to such an extraordinary degree of wisdom; their fastidious pride in their supposed great learning*, displayed in a variety of trite quotations from different authors, that the public may know how many languages they are acquainted with, and how many learned volumes they have published; and then their extraordinary powers whereby they can cure all sorts of diseases by their own nostrums and inventions, bestowing at the same time, on all besides themselves, the opprobrious epithets of *fools, maniacs, blockheads, madmen, wizards, furious fanatics, bedlamites, violent enthusiasts, &c.* &c.; these are the very arts whereby they work on the unthinking multitude; especially when all this is covered with the cant of pretended philanthropy; and, above all, with an hypocritical reverence for deity, only forsooth, because after the maturest deliberation, the faculty conceive that vaccination is a most merciful and providential discovery; and that however it might operate against their own interest, as far as a dangerous disease is diminished thereby; yet that it ought to be promoted to the utmost of their power."

Mr. Hill proceeds:—"After these introductory remarks on the subject at large, I have next solemnly to assert, that having inoculated in different places, not less than 4840 subjects, independent of 3720, and upwards, which have been inoculated at Surrey Chapel School Room; I have not, as yet, met with ONE SINGLE FAILURE; though, upon the repetitions of my visits, I have at all times made it a point to inquire, with the utmost diligence in my power; nor yet in any one point of view, have I seen any of those distressful consequences which have been brought forward with so much *art* and *downright falsehood*, to alarm the fears and terrify the imaginations of the public." After contrasting vaccination with the variolous

* Dr. Moseley could not even write his motto for his publication, but he must transcribe, with a considerable degree of profanity, the well-known passage from the Greek Testament, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

inoculation, in regard to their attendant expence, and the frequent distressing consequences that attend the latter, such as sometimes loss of sight, and others sent corrupted victims to the grave ; he adds, “ Oh, what dreadful consequences the poor of the nation are left to suffer in such an extreme degree, though such an effectual remedy is now at hand !”

“ It is in vain to expatiate against the artful stratagems, the self-interested motives of a Moseley, a Birch, a Squirrell, and others of their anti-vaccinarian satellites, who can dance around the destructive altar of variolous inoculation, by their wanton pretensions to sportive wit, while the lives of thousands are at stake. It is in vain to tell the public, that the characters of these men, as it respects their attempts against vaccination are gone, for ever gone ; in having been detected, that either through ignorance or art, they have been guilty of printing and reprinting a set of tales which never existed, or exaggerated statements, which they must know, or might have known, were nothing to the purpose, while the cause of all the fatal mischief, must rest with them alone.”

Mr. Hill examines the principal arguments which are brought by the opponents of vaccination, in favour of their destructive inoculation, and disposes of them very triumphantly. “ Attend to Dr. Moseley and some others,” says he, “ and they will tell you that the small-pox, communicated by inoculation, is *never* fatal, *never* dangerous, and the patient *never* liable to a second attack. Now, what doctors could possibly say more, if people would but believe them ? but take it with you, at the same time, *they* are the men by whom these wonders are to be performed ; for other poor bunglers in inoculation are obliged to mention with regret, that it is always dangerous, because sometimes, though but seldom fatal, that with all their skill, neither violent inflammations of the arm, nor the formation of terrible abscesses, can at all times be possibly avoided ; and as for what these *polite* doctors call mange, itch, &c. these they know to be the frequent concomitants of *their* inoculation ; and then, as to the dreadful

consequences of contagion, who is to protect the poor from this evil, while the rich can afford to protect themselves? But it should be remarked that while they protect themselves, they communicate destruction to others. Is it possible for language to describe the mischiefs that have arisen from the wanton introduction of the small-pox, by inoculation among those who cannot or dare not submit to a voluntary introduction of this loathsome epidemic disease? Let all such infected persons, who choose the variolous inoculation, be conveyed to a pest-house, and let those clever doctors, Moseley and Co. be appointed physicians *extraordinary* to that institution, indemnifying every consequent loss among the poor, and the principal objections against *their* inoculation, will, in some measure, no longer exist."

While Mr. Hill was preparing his pamphlet for the press, he received some communications from Dr. Lettsom, informing him "that a physician in Madras had inoculated two hundred and fifty thousand British subjects and Gentoos, with the cow-pock, without the least inconvenience; and that the grateful Brahmins term it the *dew of heaven*, because, prior to this, nine in ten, as is frequently the case in those hot countries, lost their lives: that this happy preservative having been administered in camps and armies, the small-pox has been arrested in its progress without the least inconvenience whatever." On which he piously remarks, "Oh, these enemies against this most beneficial discovery! what incalculable mischiefs have been produced by their false and daring publications! and what have they not to answer for, before their King, their country, and their God!"

In a letter which accompanied these communications, Dr. Lettsom informed Mr. Hill that the practice of vaccination was gradually lessening the mortality arising from the small-pox in 1804, when about the middle of 1805, the false and scandalous reports which were then industriously propagated against vaccination, gained such general credit, that the practice of the latter was generally suspended, and the con-

sequence was the death of 1286 children in four months (Sept. Oct. Nov. Dec.) or ten every day, each of whom might then have been alive, had the blessing of vaccination been accepted. "I am anxious," says the doctor, "to see your pamphlet in print. The good it will do will be difficult to calculate; but I can already assert, that you have done more good than you imagine; and that for every one you may have saved by your actual operation, you have saved ten by your example: and, perhaps, next to Jenner, you have been the means of saving more lives than any other individual. Under this sentiment you possess the unfeigned esteem of your friend."

One cannot reasonably doubt that such a testimony must have been highly gratifying to Mr. Hill—indeed he confesses it in a note on the place—after which he tenders his apology for having stepped out of his sphere to meddle with *the trade* of another class of men. "I know I shall be well catechised," says he, "by *some* of the doctors of the day, for interfering with their profession, while I have so much to do with my own. My answer to them is, they would have saved me all the trouble had they adopted the same liberal and affectionate conduct for the public good, through the country at large, which has ever been exemplified by the professional gentlemen of the Jennerian Society, belonging to this city. My attempts, therefore, were neither needed nor have they been exerted in this metropolis, unless occasionally to countenance the discovery, or to oblige some particular friends. But among the country practitioners, I confess it is far otherwise though there are some very praiseworthy exceptions; for while they hang back bargaining for their fees, pretending, at the same time, to administer vaccination gratis among the poor—vaccination will never become the general blessing of the land." After some pointed remarks on selfishness in the human character, particularly in reference to this subject, he adds, "It is on these accounts that I not only at first found it necessary to turn practitioner myself, but to instruct others also how to use the lancet, and how to discover the real nature

of the disease; and supposing that ministers having an influence over their congregations, might more easily remove prejudices than others. I have always esteemed it my duty to urge this work of mercy peculiarly on them, and in this, I thank God, I have successfully prevailed."

Mr. Hill proceeds to give directions concerning the lancet and manner of using it in the practice of vaccination—the symptoms and proper treatment of the complaint, with the necessary cautions to be observed, &c.; after which he thus makes his appeal. "I flatter myself the reader will acknowledge that I can have no other design in the publication of this little treatise, than the promotion of the general good; nor can I express the uncommon satisfaction my mind has felt, not only in having frequently banished the small-pox, where that 'plague had actually begun,' but in receiving the most grateful testimonies of the people at large, for having persuaded them to submit to a discovery so secure, so beneficial, and so mild. Nor are the testimonies I receive from others, to whom I have communicated the knowledge of vaccination, less pleasant and gratifying to the feelings of my heart; while all of them unite with me in testifying that the longer they continue in the practice of vaccination, the more fully their minds are satisfied respecting the happy consequences that result therefrom.

"In order to excite others to the luxury of doing so much good at so easy a rate, and (though it should sound a little like vanity, I shall have no need to blush) I give the reader a summary of the whole. Having had many fresh applicants for vaccination since this treatise has been in the press, including my list of those I have vaccinated in different parts of the country, with others whose names I never registered, and those also at Surrey Chapel, I have had very near *nine thousand* subjects almost under my immediate inspection. I may very moderately calculate another thousand who have been vaccinated through the instruction given by me to others. Now, here is a list of *ten thousand* cases, near five thousand

of whom were inoculated with my own hand, and not one evil consequence, as yet, has been heard of which has created the least alarm. And as for deaths merely by the cow-pock properly communicated, whatever other diseases may have proved mortal about the same time, the person who maintains that such a case ever did occur, proves himself ignorant and rash in a high degree.

“But now the flattering calculation in favour of these exertions:—we will take the average of deaths by the small-pox to be rather under one in six: the vaccination of ten thousand subjects, therefore, produces the preservation of *one thousand six hundred lives*. After having said so much I need not add, that next to attending upon the functions of my own calling, I never undertook a work so satisfactory to my own mind; nor can I sufficiently urge on others no longer to wait a single moment in hopes that the professional men will first begin. Let our exertions be universal, immediate, and zealous, and I am very sure a death by the small-pox will be brought forward as a very rare instance indeed; in short, I believe that no one disease will be less fatal than that which is now so much the dreaded scourge of the human race. One sacred touch further, I would humbly beg to recommend to all my readers, whereby they may be secured from those evils which defile the soul infinitely greater than the worst of diseases, which pollute and defile the human frame; and, blessed be God, that there is a power not less sovereign and efficacious, which does the sacred work, and makes us wisely good, even the grace of God that bringeth salvation, and which teaches us, by an almighty and intuitive principle, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, as being beneath the dignity of our existence, if we exist in him, and divinely enables to “live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.”

I have thus rescued from oblivion the contents of this singular pamphlet, considering it amply entitled to a perpetuation, among other instances of his active zeal, his benevolence, his universal philanthropy, and unceasing desire to benefit his

fellow creatures. It deserves notice also in another point of view: I mean as one of the happiest efforts of Mr. Hill's style of writing. Throughout the whole pamphlet his feelings have been chastened and brought into a correspondence with his subject. We nowhere find him indulging his natural propensity to wit and sarcasm. He is pleading the cause of humanity, and he does it in a most becoming spirit and temper of mind. Where censure is necessary he bestowed it, and inflicts chastisement where it was called for. Every page shows a just confidence in the goodness of the cause in which he was embarked, and his intrepidity was well calculated to embolden the timid and confirm the wavering, while his elevated situation and popularity must have rendered his example doubly influential. It has fallen to our lot to live in a day when all clamour against the practice of vaccination has ceased to be heard—but it would be unjust to the memory of Mr. Hill to overlook his noble exertions in buffeting the storm of obloquy which raged in his day, or forget his disinterested labours in procuring that calm which we now enjoy. "Others have laboured, and we are entered into their labours."

SECTION VII.

MR. HILL'S VILLAGE DIALOGUES.

WE now approach the most elaborate, and the most popular of all Mr. Hill's productions; that on which his claims to authorship must mainly rest, namely, his "Village Dialogues." This work first appeared about thirty years ago; and, if we may credit the title-page of the edition of 1833, an impression has been called for annually, on an average of years; for it professes to be the "THIRTIETH EDITION"—but "*fronte nulla fides*;" booksellers are not always to be implicitly relied upon

in these matters. If they were, we should say there had been *thirty thousand* copies of the work disposed of, which, in a publication of that extent, is hardly to be credited. That the sale has been considerable, we have the testimony of Mr. Hill himself; who, in the preface, written January 1824, at which time the work had been more than twenty years before the public, declares that the demand for it had been "far beyond his expectation." Up to that time, the "Village Dialogues" had been comprised in two volumes, duodecimo. But the copyright falling into the hands of a spirited publisher, the author was induced to revise the whole for a new edition, which was to be stereotyped, and numerous additions being made to it, the work was enlarged to three volumes instead of two.

The additions which were at this time introduced, chiefly respect the Socinian controversy. Mr. Hill had recently been perusing Dr. Magee's work on Atonement and Sacrifice; Dr. Wardlaw's Lectures on the Socinian Controversy; and Dr. Pye Smith's learned work on the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. Highly gratified with these valuable treatises, on this important subject, it struck him as a matter of regret, that such publications were too elaborate for general use, and that they still left readers of plainer understanding open to the attacks of those enemies of the faith once delivered to the saints. He conceived, therefore, "it might be beneficial to the souls of men, if some of the leading arguments on a subject of such high importance, were to be put into a more popular style;" and that he attempted to do in this new edition of his "Village Dialogues."

We learn from this preface that the author had been not a little annoyed by a variety of critics, tendering him their advice how to improve his performance; who, nevertheless differed so widely in their opinions and views, as to render it quite impossible to please them all. "One set of them," he tells us, "admires at least my humble attempt to fix an appropriate name to the different characters before they are dressed, that it may be known what is to be expected from each of

them, like the running title of a book. Others, not well versed in drama, tell me, that nothing should be discovered by name, because the character is anticipated before it ought. Now, let it be supposed, that all these are discontinued, and the mere unsentimental names of Brown, Johnson, Hill, Wilson, &c. had been substituted, would such a cold conceit have gratified or displeased?

“Some have told me, that all ridicule is inconsistent with the temper and spirit which Christianity should inspire. Others have determined, that it is utterly impossible to be too severe, where folly and wickedness are to be exposed; especially where the dramatic dress covers all such attacks from the charge of personal abuse. Some have supposed, that every attempt at pleasantry or wit, is utterly unallowable on a subject, which in itself, is so solemn and grave. Others have said, that such sallies of fancy, if innocent and within correct bounds, recreate the mind, engage the attention, and cannot be productive of any bad influence whatever; and that the graver language of Scripture, written under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit (though, even there, such instances are not wanting,) needs not to be the standard to regulate what we write for the instruction of each other. And, again; some have supposed that when a bad minister or character has been held forth as a proper example for reproof, it was meant as a *sweeping* charge, without any discrimination. Others have thought, that if I have lashed characters who are bad, equal respect has been shewn, and in the same line, to those who are good; and if these different contrasted characters are not so *regularly* kept up, as might have been deemed requisite in the judgment of some; yet, they conceive the *quantum* of good represented to be in existence, is quite equal to that which circumstances will allow us to suppose, from the depraved state of the world, through the wickedness of the human heart. Still, in some instances, I am satisfied I have been favoured with hints that will improve the work and these shall be thankfully adopted.

“ One set of critics, however, I shall entirely disregard; and, as in no one instance have I shown any favour towards them, so shall I expect none in return; I mean the bigotry of every party. And, while they are so ignorant of their own spirit, as to sanction their sectarian principles, by masking their evils under the mild appellations of order, regularity, consistency, principle, discipline, steadiness, &c.; it would be in vain, were I so inclined, to attack them in return. But, I forbear to enter into a controversy with those who make the sacrament (*viz.* of the Lord’s supper), the exclusive criterion of the sect to which they belong; so contrary to the mind of Christ, and to the nature of that ordinance, in which all his living members are so solemnly directed to look upon themselves as one in Him.”

This last paragraph, for the substance of it, is only a repetition of what has repeatedly come under our notice in other parts of Mr. Hill’s writings. The truth is, the good man’s mind was all awry upon this subject. So large and comprehensive was his charity, that he could receive into his embrace almost any thing but a strict and conscientious adherence to the instituted order of Christ’s house; an inflexible determination to be guided in all these affairs by the example of the apostolic churches; this he called bigotry, and shewed it no favour. Let an individual, or a society of Christians determine to reject all human authority in the concerns of religion; to have ‘thus saith the Lord,’ for all they believe and practise; to pay implicit deference to *all* the sayings of Christ and his apostles; to regard all the laws of his kingdom and all his institutions as of indispensable obligation, and to have no religious fellowship with any persons who can make light of, or disobey them; and what, then? Oh, this is sectarianism, unwarrantable strictness, the quintessence of bigotry! Such is the spirit of that profane Catholic charity for which Mr. Hill was such a stickler; it can tolerate any thing rather than the genuine operation of conscience. Now, even though Mr. Hill could demonstrate, that in some instances these rigid

bigots, as he terms them, were in error, and mistook their Lord's will (which he has never thought it worth his while to attempt); yet, surely, a deference to the authority of him who purchased them by his blood; a trembling at his word; an anxious solicitude in all things to be found in the way of duty; in short, whatever betokens the action, operation, and exercise of conscience, ought to command our respect and veneration; and should endear such persons to us; whereas Mr. Hill never meets with them, but they become the objects of his vituperation, as in the paragraph lately quoted. He is delighted with such writers as Dr. Mason, of New York; and the late Mr. Robert Hall, of Leicester; because, like himself, they wrote at random on the subject of communion, teaching men to make light of the commandments of God, when they stand in the way of their unauthorized Catholic Communion. This, those great men did, and taught others to do; and the Saviour himself hath instructed us in what estimation they are to be held in his kingdom, Matt. v. 19. I am perfectly aware of the specious pleas that are urged in behalf of this *free* and *mixt* and *generous* communion of Episcopalians and Presbyterians, and Protestant Dissenters, Pædobaptist and Anti-Pædobaptist; a communion which is no where exemplified in the New Testament, nor ever can be practised but at the expence of allegiance to Christ, and making light of his laws and institutions. Schism is, no doubt, an evil to be deplored; but it will never be counteracted by removing any of the statutes and ordinances and enactments of Messiah's kingdom from the place which he has allotted them; the only effectual way of curing it, is to return to the rule laid down for us to walk by, in the example of the first churches, and scrupulously adhering to that. As Dr. Wardlaw has well observed, "We must find out the rule, and stick by it." But not to enlarge on this point at present, I may remark, that in judging of the Village Dialogues, it is important to keep in view the particular class of persons for whose instruction and benefit the author intended them; and this is suffi-

ciently indicated by the term "Village." Were we to lose sight of this, and criticise the performance as one designed for the use of educated persons inhabiting polished cities, we should do the author manifest injustice. Every one must admit that the propriety of any action must depend on circumstances, and to judge of the fitness or unfitness of a subject, or part of a subject, or manner of treating it, we must attend to the circumstances of the case. The colloquial or dialogue form of writing, which Mr. Hill adopted in these volumes, was doubtless very suitable to the capacities of the peasantry about Wotton Underedge, and other country villages; but it is not the most favourable for theological discussion, and would not have been chosen by the author, had the display of talent or learning been the object he had in view. Mr. Jay characterizes the Village Dialogues, as written in his own peculiar manner, with a great degree of Bunyan's imagination and tenderness. Another writer adds, that "they display a vast knowledge of the Bible; of men; and of things. The incidents are natural, the colloquies well sustained, and highly instructive and practical." But they are best described by Mr. Lacey, in the second volume of his "Public Characters," p. 230, who thus speaks of them: "they well deserve the popularity they have met with, and will never cease, while sound piety in the English tongue can be read and relished, to form one of the chief and standard works of our popular religious literature. No other individual could have blended so much genuine wit and wisdom, with lessons of the purest morality, and doctrines and maxims of the sublimest piety. Some of the characters are drawn with inimitable skill, and with such truth to nature and fact, that the reader can scarcely be persuaded that he is not seeing and hearing the originals in all their rustic simplicity, or in all their clerical dignity and grace."

I am more desirous of bringing forward the opinion of others respecting this work than of obtruding my own. But having been employed by the publisher, about ten years ago,

to correct the punctuation (in which all Mr. Hill's pieces are miserably defective) previous to the volumes being stereotyped, I was laid under the necessity of carefully going through the whole, and, having at that time no great predilection for the dialogue form of writing, I remember to have been agreeably disappointed, and not a little pleased with certain parts of it, more especially with the strictures on Socinianism and Antinomianism. For though I should never regard Rowland Hill as "a cedar," in reference to theology, since in this point of view he can only be classed among "the fir trees"—yet the stress he invariably lays upon the person and atonement of Christ, in the matter of a sinner's salvation, and not less so on the holy influence of the truth wherever it is really understood and believed, must give pleasure to all who love the Saviour and have tasted that he is gracious. Add to which that the shrewdness of remark and power of intellect, everywhere displayed, are more than sufficient to distinguish the author from the general run of clerical drones. One may readily credit the fact that the writing of the Village Dialogues, in which he had to accommodate his style to such a variety of character, must have cost Mr. Hill more labour of intellect than all his other writings, where he had nothing to do but to put down upon paper his first thoughts as they occurred to him.

The three volumes comprise fifty dialogues, the subjects of which are exceedingly miscellaneous—so much so, indeed, that they may almost be said to treat, "*de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis.*" Cottage piety; genuine repentance; baptismal regeneration; the evils of stage exhibitions; utility of Sunday schools; evils of the slave trade; Socinianism unmasked; evils of seduction; conjugal fidelity; self-righteousness; sectarian bigotry; Antinomianism unmasked; enthusiasm detected; the rake's progress and ruin; prison meditations; benevolence triumphant, &c. &c. are among the number of discussed subjects.

The *exposé* of Socinianism occupies five of the dialogues, and it is clear enough from the references made to Dr. Priestley's

writings and those of Lindsey, Belsham, and others, that Mr. Hill had gone pretty fully into the investigation of their creed. The sixteenth dialogue presents us with a conversation on this topic, in which the principal speakers are the Rev. Mr. Spiteful, Master of the Free Grammar School, in Envy Lane; Mapleton, a high and bigoted churchman; Mr. Wisehead, a Socinian bookseller in the same town; and Mr. Considerate, one of the Aldermen of Mapleton, who, though a member of the Church of England, held Evangelical sentiments, and attended upon Mr. Lovegood's ministry. The conversation took place at old Madam Toogood's, over a dish of tea and a game of cards. Miss Polly Littleworth also made one of the company. The latter young lady had a wild rakish brother, who has been happily convinced of the error of his way by the preaching of Mr. Lovegood, the Evangelical Clergyman of Brookfield Church, and this introduces the conversation.

Miss Polly apologizes for having kept the company waiting tea, which was occasioned by her having to call at the shop of Mr. Traffick, in her way thither, for some grocery and other goods.

"*Rev. Mr Spiteful.* I wonder that every body should be running to that shop, to support such a schismatical enthusiast, as though there were no other shops but his. I would turn my servant away if he should dare to go there for a *hap'worth* of sand.

"*Wisehead*, (the Socinian). I do not mean to displease you, Sir, by observing that such sort of illiberal expressions are ill-becoming a gentleman of a liberal education. Surely a man is not a Schismatic because he cannot conform to all the rules and doctrines of your national church.

"*Spiteful.* Why is not ours the true national Church, as established by law?

"*Wisehead.* Assuredly so, Sir: but it should be remembered, that when yours is but a new dissenting church from the old established Church of Rome, and that by such a dissent, you by no means admit her boasted infallibility; there can be

no great criminality if others choose to take a step further from your establishment. We cannot all think exactly alike. Besides, Sir, how can you call Mr. Traffic a Schismatic now? for he has left our meeting sometime since, though he and his family were always brought up among us, and regularly attends at Brookfield Church.

“*Spiteful.* Worse and worse. What business has he, and a thousand more such run-about fellows, to leave their own proper parish churches where they ought to attend; for immediately as Lovegood is removed, all the mob that follows him will be off to different *conventicles*, if they have not one of the same sort to preach what these canting hypocrites choose to call the Gospel.

“*Mr. Considerate.* Now, really, Sir, we get no good by such vehemence; for I verily conceive that no human laws have a right to force any one to worship contrary to their consciences. Nor can I suppose that Mr. Lovegood is to be blamed for filling his own Church, if no fault is to be found with others for emptying theirs. And as to Mr. Traffic, if a man acts conscientiously in his business, I don't see what we have to do with his religion, and I believe it is admitted on all hands, that he is very just and true in all his dealings.

“*Miss Polly.* Sir, my father insists upon it that we must all run *galloping* to that shop. I hardly think he would let our Sam wear livery, if he did not send there for all the trimmings: and when I was there, to be sure, how he *held forth* behind the counter, as though he had been in a pulpit, about the miraculous conversion of my brother, as he called it. I am sure of late we are quite *suffocated* (surfeited) with religion in our house.

“*Spite.* Yes, *conversion*: this is a mighty word with them; for it seems that not only such men as your brother, who was once so wild, and is now become so *sanctified*, but every one who steps aside from their strict notions of religion, they suppose to be no better than heathens, and they must all be converted or be damned. Mr. Wisehead, you are a man of

reading: I dare say you admit the justice of my remarks against these enthusiasts.

“ *Wise.* Why, Sir, if you can talk with more prudence and moderation upon these subjects, I shall have no objection to answer you. In my opinion, however, it is very injudicious to bring forward the words conversion and regeneration, as though they could be in any sense applicable among *us Christians* in the present day. They were only designed for primitive times, when people were brought over from being Jews or Pagans, to be of the Christian religion: but how can any of us be converted to a religion, to which we are converted already.

“ *Consid.* What then, Sir, do you think that Henry Littleworth was a Christian, when he and his comrades kept our town in a perpetual uproar: and when one evening they got from your barber, one of your old wigs, and put it on an ass’s head, and then drove him down the town, and into your shop, saying, the ass was come to sup with his brother, Mr. Wisehead?

“ *Wise.* Certainly, Sir, these were very unwise and irrational steps in that giddy youth; notwithstanding, it would be the highest reflection upon the Supreme Being, to suppose we have not, within ourselves, from the principles of *natural religion*, sufficient powers to reform ourselves from any vicious courses when we like. For what purpose has the Almighty given to every man both reason and conscience, if these were not adequate to the reformation of mankind?

“ *Consid.* Why, really, Sir, I can’t see what great matters reason has ever done in the reformation of mankind. She seems to stand aside and let nine-tenths act by mere passion and appetite: and as for conscience, I am sure, among thousands, that acts like an unfaithful and intoxicated watchman, without either eyes or brains. I believe that my wife’s minister is quite right in his doctrine, that all the faculties of the human mind are exceedingly vitiated and depraved; and till God mends reason and conscience, they will never mend us.

But pray, Sir, did you ever meet with any of these rational converts in any of your travels? and is it not very strange that your Doctor should have to bestow so many of his rational lectures on a set of almost empty pews?

“*Wise.* We cannot account for such extraordinary events; but still we believe that if we could make the common people more rational, we should be better attended—if mankind are vicious it is their own fault, for we *may* all be good if we *will*.

“*Consid.* Certainly so. See, Madam, how that cat is a-licking and cleaning herself all over.

“*Mrs. Toogood.* Oh, Sir, she is a lovely delicate creature.

“*Consid.* [To Mr. Wisehead.] Then I suppose the cat has a *will* to be clean, and she proves the point, she may be clean, if she *will*. [To Miss Polly.] Now Miss Polly Littleworth, did you ever see any of your father’s hogs sit upright, and wash and clean themselves with their fore-feet like that cat? and however awkwardly they might do it, yet they certainly may if they *will*; but, alas, they want the will.

“*Spite.* Well, such a thought, had I lived a thousand years, would never have entered my brains; but, pray, are we to be compared to hogs and cats?

“*Consid.* Why, in the Bible, men have been compared to brutes before now: to lions, bears, tigers, or leopards, wolves, foxes, and dogs, and to birds also not less ravenous than such sort of beasts, to eagles, vultures, ravens and others; yea, and to the worst of reptiles, to vipers themselves. But I only ask, if ever there was found that creature, either among men or brutes, that could *will* contrary to his inclination or disposition? What then can we mean by saying, we *may* all be good if we *will*? who, in his senses, ever denied it? Just so bad men *will* be bad, and good men *will* be good. Is not every one’s will regulated by his disposition? Such, however, is the glib nonsense of the day.

“*Wise.* I hope, Sir, you do not think that we *rational* dissenters talk nonsense; but according to your notions, (and I would not wish to misunderstand you, as I believe you have a

good heart, and mean well) man is a mere machine—and there is an end to all distinction between virtue and vice in man, if we are *obliged* to act according to our dispositions, and have *no power* to correct them.

“*Mad. Toogood.* Oh! shocking, shocking, Mr. Considerate, I never thought you could believe in such bad notions of religion. I am very sorry to hear that of late you have been such a strict follower of Lovegood. I am sure he preaches very wicked doctrines; and if none of us are to be rewarded for the practice of our morality, I don’t see why we should give ourselves so much *trouble* about it.

“*Spite.* Yes, Madam, and such are the tenets held forth at Brookfield Church. I suppose that Atheism will be preached there next.

“*Consid.* Now I beg, Sir, you would be a little more dispassionate, and give me a calm answer to the following questions: supposing you should ask any of the wild sparks in our town the reason why they gave way to such courses, what do you think would be their answer? Why that they were overpowered by *temptation* and inclination before they submitted to such ways.

“*Spite.* I suppose they might, Sir, but what of that?

“*Consid.* Then it seems they wanted strength or power to resist, and that reason and conscience did them no good, and that they were conquered by the wicked inclinations and corruptions of their hearts.

“*Spite.* But if you make it out that these people acted *against their wills* in what they did, I can see no harm in any of their wicked tricks.

“*Consid.* Stop, Sir, you go on too fast: did I suppose they acted *against* their wills, when they acted *according* to their inclinations? Is not every man’s will and inclination virtually the same? And are not people with bad inclinations, *wilfully* wicked? while others with good inclinations are *willingly* pious. I think, Mr. Wisehead, the will is nothing but the servant of the understanding and inclinations

“ *Wise.* Really, Sir, your question is so intricate and important, I would rather take some time to consider that point.

“ *Spite.* Why, where is the difficulty of answering that question? What has the understanding or inclination to do with the will, have we not all a free will to act as we like best? Had I not a free will to come here, and must I not have a free will to go home again?

“ *Consid.* Pray, Sir, have you a free will to throw yourself into the fire, or jump into the water, or to go to Brookfield Church next Sunday?

“ *Spite.* How can a man have a free will to do those things which he naturally hates?

“ *Consid.* Why then, having no inclination to throw yourself into the fire or water, or to go to Brookfield Church, there would be no getting you to do these things but by force. Now I always thought with you, ever since I have considered this point, that every man's will must be free to follow his inclinations and dispositions; and that is the reason why the world lives so wickedly, because they like it best. And I think if you had attended more to the feelings of your own mind, and the minds of others, you would have found it out, that all people act according to their inclinations and dispositions whether good or bad and that the understanding debates according to the object set before it; next comes the choice, and the will at last determines to pursue the object that is *suggested* by the inclinations, *digested* by the understanding, and *preferred* by the choice: in short, to talk about free will, is but *putting the cart before the horse*: for, of this I am persuaded, we never act but as we are acted upon, and that good or evil is the result of all actions, according to the habit of the mind.

“ *Spite.* Then we are all like pumps or wheel-barrows, and not rational creatures. I am for *rational religion* with Mr. Wisehead.

“ *Consid.* And so am I too, Sir; but though rational creatures make machines, yet there is no rationality in the machine itself. Now I believe every man exercises his reason accord-

ing to his nature and disposition, and when I suppose the pure and holy word of God is proposed to the choice of all, they who reject it do it with the utmost freedom of the will, because they dislike it, and that all good men have exactly the same freedom of will in the choice of good: 'for if the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed.' And when we are commanded to 'work out our salvation with fear and trembling;' that we may properly work at all, we are told, 'it is God that worketh in us to *will* and to do of his good pleasure,' and that we are made his '*willing* people in the day of his power.' So that instead of being an enemy to *rational* religion, I cannot see how there can be any religion that is not *rational*.

"*Spite*. Where, Sir, in the name of wonder, did you get all these cramp expressions from?

"*Consid*. Why, Sir, from a book I am ashamed I have paid so little attention to till of late, the Bible; and while you and Mr. Wisehead are attempting to explain away all those fine strong expressions of conversion, regeneration, a new creation; and the like, I have of late seen that a peculiar wisdom and glory belong to them; and that it is no unmeaning abstruse metaphor, but a plain downright matter of fact; that 'except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'" This ends the first conversation between the parties. But the subject is resumed in dialogue seventeen, by Mr. Considerate thus interrogating—

"*Consid*. I should be glad to know, if any further dispute should arise between us, how far we are to settle the conversation by the Bible, for I suspect your notions of the Bible are very loose: at least, as I suppose.

"*Wise*. Just so far, Sir, as it is consistent with *reason*, and no further. I never can believe that which contradicts my reason.

"*Consid*. Indeed, Sir, if this be the case we are likely to be terribly misguided; while reason, among our ignorant and benighted race appears to be so much under the influence of prejudice and passion. If twenty men of different persuasions,

be called together, however flatly they may contradict each other, they would all tell you they are *guided by reason*.

“*Spite*. Well, Sir, for all that, I am quite of Mr. Wisehead’s opinion, that we have no business with the Bible when it flatly contradicts our reason; though in all points we may not understand it. It would surely be a fine thing, if we were to believe what we cannot comprehend, or else go to hell and be damned!

“*Consid.* Why then, Sir, am I so to understand you and Mr. Wisehead, as to suppose you are Atheists, for you cannot comprehend the incomprehensible attributes of God; or that you do not believe your own existence, because you cannot understand the nature of that existence? If you and Mr. Wisehead are only to believe the Bible so far as you can comprehend it, that book, in your opinion, is no better than a mere history of uncertain events; and then, notwithstanding revelation, we have nothing left us but to guess at religion as well as we can, and what sort of guess-work this has proved, even among the most cultivated of the heathen nations, is evident enough.

“*Wise*. Sir, I believe the book, which we generally call the Bible, is but little more than the works of good men, subject to the same infirmities as ourselves, who, though they might have written according to the best of their judgments, were still frequently warped by their national prejudices, in favour of their own religion.

“*Consid.* Indeed, gentlemen, if the word *conversion* should be inapplicable to young Mr. Henry Littleworth, yet it cannot be unsuitable to either of you; for Jews, Mahomedans, and even Pagans, believe some things contained in the Bible as well as yourselves; while neither you nor they give any more credit to it, as the “*Book of Revelation*,” than I do the history of Robinson Crusoe.

“*Spite*. Why really, Mr. Wisehead, I begin to be afraid we are going rather too far; this is making out the Bible to be but little better than an old, ill-written, ecclesiastical history

Though I don't at all approve of Lovegood's notions the more for that.

“ *Wise.* Indeed, Sir, if you wish to know more correctly ‘my opinion, what a Christian is bound to believe, with respect to the Scriptures, I am not afraid to answer, that the books which are universally received as authentic, are to be considered as faithful records of past transactions.’ ‘No Christian is answerable for more than this; the writers of the books of Scripture were *men*, and therefore *fallible*; but all that we have to do with them, is in the character of *historians* and *witnesses* of what they heard and saw. Of course, their credibility is to be estimated like that of other historians, viz. from the circumstances under which they wrote, as with respect to their opportunities of knowing the truth of what they relate, and the biasses to which they might be subject. Like all other historians, they are liable to mistakes, with respect to things of small moment, because *they might not give sufficient attention to them*: and with respect to their *reasonings*, we are *fully* at liberty to judge of them as well as of those of other men, by a due consideration of the propositions they advance, and the arguments they allege.’ ‘And if such men have even communications with the Deity, it by no means follows that they are, in other respects, more wise and knowing than other men*.’ This point, I suppose to be proved by the *lame account*† Moses has given of the creation and fall of man, not having the means of exact information! So that to suppose ‘the books of Scripture were written by particular divine inspiration, is a thing to which the writers themselves make no pretensions; it is a notion destitute of all proof, and that has done great injury to the evidences of Christianity‡.’ As to St. Paul’s Epistles, therefore, and the other epistles, I never can admit that the authors of them were immediately inspired for the purpose of

* See Priestley’s Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever, Part II., Pref. p. xiii., and Lett. V.

† Priestley.

‡ Priestley’s Letters, p. 58.

writing them; and many of our rational divines have thought them in many instances unintelligible and absurd.

“*Consid.* Well, Sir, this is speaking out with a witness. I don’t think one Deist in ten would have spoken more decidedly against the Scriptures. Pray, Sir, if such be your judgment of the Epistles, what are we to think of the Gospels?

“*Wise.* O, Sir! I have no doubt but all the four evangelists, as they are called, were very honest men, and that they wrote ‘the history of Jesus,’ according to the best of their judgment; though we suspect their genuine histories have been intermixed with many interpolations; and it appears that ‘some texts of the Old Testament have been *improperly* quoted by writers of the New,’ who it seems were sometimes ‘*mised* by Jewish prejudices *.’ Surely, therefore, it must be owned, that ‘some obscurity is left in the Scriptures themselves, which might *mislead* readers, full of heathen prejudices, and so left it should seem, to whet human industry and the spirit of inquiry; † and the Bereans are commended for not taking the word even of an apostle, but examining the Scriptures for themselves, whether the doctrine which they heard was true, and whether St. Paul’s reasoning was just ‡.’ Such, Sir, are the sentiments of all the great divines of our denomination, who have written on the subject.

“*Consid.* Are we then to suppose, that the Bereans searched the Old Testament Scriptures under any other idea, but that their decisions were definitive? I should have thought that when they searched the Scriptures, it was not with a design to examine whether they were right or wrong, but rather that they referred to them as an infallible guide. If they had only to look into the *lame account* which Moses has given of these matters, I do not know that any thing but confusion could be the result of their diligence.

* Theological Repository quoted in Fuller’s Systems,

† Lindsey’s Apology, ch. II.

‡ Belsham’s Sermon on the Importance of Truth p. 39.

“ *Wise.* Well, well, Sir, I cannot give up the point; we must be guided by our own reason, as it respects revelation.

“ *Consid.* Allow me, then, Sir, to ask you this plain question: If we are to be guided alone by our reason, while we are at liberty to doubt every word of revelation, are we to call this Infidelity or Christianity? or is not downright Deism, far more rational and consistent?

“ *Wise.* O, Sir, we are still believers in the Christian religion.

“ *Consid.* Why, then Christian believers are at liberty to doubt the certainty of every truth of revelation itself; I beg leave, therefore, further to ask, if this be Christianity, what is Infidelity?

“ *Wise.* Sir, the question is easily answered; some few infidels doubt whether there ever was such a person as Jesus Christ; and others of them think there is no future state; but we all believe there will be a future state, and that there was such a person as *Jesus, the Son of Mary*; but then we do not conceive ourselves bound to believe the story of his miraculous conception, or his pre-existence, as it is called; or the strange, inconsistent, mysterious doctrine of the Trinity: and among other ‘Corruptions of Christianity,’ contrary to what we esteem the *rational* and the ‘true gospel of Christ,’ we reject what is commonly called the ‘doctrine of the atonement:’ in every shape, and under every modification of it, ‘it is unfounded in the Christian revelation*.’ Nor can we believe, that there is any such being as the Holy Spirit. Consequently we have nothing to do with the abstruse notion of regeneration, or, as it is called, the work of the Spirit: we believe that such sort of expressions are to be taken as mere *figurative language*, and that it only means a good disposition. We, therefore, consequently deny the popular doctrine of original sin, as there is quite as much virtue as vice in the world. We have no doubt at all as to the devil, that he is

* Belsham’s Caution against Popular Errors, p. 15.

entirely a fabulous character; and as to what is said concerning those who are possessed of the devil, it were irrational to suppose that it could mean any thing further than that 'they were mad, or had hysteric fits!' As to the existence of angels, though there are *frequent allusions* to it in the New Testament, yet it is 'a doctrine that cannot be proved, or made probable *from the light of nature*;' and what have we to do with the New Testament, while it contradicts *the light of nature*? Notwithstanding, therefore, the *allusion*, we choose to say, 'this is no where taught as a doctrine of revelation. A *judicious* Christian, therefore, will discard it from his creed; and that, not only as a groundless, but as a *useless* and *pernicious* tenet, which tends to diminish our regard to the omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent God, and to excite superstitious respect to, and unreasonable expectations from *imaginary and fictitious beings* *.' When, therefore, we hear how Jesus was tempted of the devil in the wilderness, it was (for we always talk very *rational* in our way) only an allusion to a fictitious being! and the proper and most rational meaning is, that he was fighting with some good and bad thoughts which alternately possessed him; but such were the Eastern metaphors and Oriental figures then in use.

"*Consid.* Then, Sir, might it not have sounded still more rational, had you made it out, that he was fighting with two Eastern metaphors, or Oriental figures?—that when the angel spoke to Zacharias about the birth of our Lord, he should not have said, 'I am Gabriel,' but 'I am an Oriental figure?' and that it was nothing but an Oriental figure that spoke to Mary on the same subject? And that Eastern metaphors, or Oriental figures appeared unto the shepherds, and sang 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will towards men:' and then again, that our Lord had another meeting of these Eastern metaphors and Oriental figures in the mount of transfiguration? that an Eastern metaphor opened the prison in

* Belsham's Caution, p. 21.

which Peter was confined, and that an Oriental figure knocked off his fetters? that Paul was converted at the sight of these Eastern metaphors? that Stephen saw somewhat of the like sort when he was stoned? and that an Eastern metaphor stood by Paul when near shipwrecked? And if these be not enough, I could give you some further lucubrations on your *rational* way of explaining these Eastern metaphors."

In a long note introduced at this part of the dialogue, Mr. Hill pursues the subject of Oriental figures and Eastern metaphors, and most triumphantly exposes the absurdity of this Socinian method of explaining away what the scriptures teach us concerning angels and spirits: thus according to them, Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, is—the prince of the Eastern metaphors. "Unto which of the angels, i. e. Oriental figures, said he, at any time, 'This day have I begotten thee?'" Again, "Let all the angels of God, i. e. Eastern metaphors, worship him." Our Lord cast out a whole legion of Eastern metaphors from the man among the tombs—and it was several of these tropical figures that possessed two thousand swine at the same time, and alarmed them in such a manner as to drive them into the sea. Moreover, according to this manner of interpretation, "thrones, dominions, principalities, and powers"—these are only Eastern metaphors! Christ spoiled principalities and powers—that is, he spoiled Eastern metaphors and Oriental figures! The angels, i. e. Oriental figures, kept not their first estate! Thus he proceeds at considerable length in showing up the wisdom of those men who boast of the *rationality* of their religion, and concludes with observing that "if this be not sufficient to expose the folly of the Saddusaic spirit of the day, nothing is."

The subject which comes next under discussion is the person and character of our Lord Jesus Christ, and is introduced by Mr. Considerate asking whether the Socinian system has nothing to do with infidelity?

"*Wisehead.* Sir, we disown the charge; we are not such infidels as to disown the divine mission of Jesus, though we

believe he is in himself to be considered ‘as a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, naturally as *weak*, as *fallible*, and as *peccable* as other men, possessed of no natural advantages over his father, or any other man in a similar situation in Judea* :’ in short, though he naturally was subject to the very same infirmities, ignorance, and prejudices as other men†; yet that he was commissioned by the Supreme Being, to instruct mankind in pure principles of morality, so far as he understood them; for, ‘though we admit that Jesus taught the truth in a *popular way*, yet we very much doubt whether in some instances, he properly and accurately understood it!!!‡’

“*Consid.* Is this the voice of Mr. Wisehead, or the ghost of some departed infidel that is uttering such dangerous and profane insinuations [he should have added the epithet *blasphemous*] against the person, and even moral character of our blessed Lord? If this be his just character, what good can we get by following such an uncertain leader? and what can we expect from the Bible itself, but that it will distract and puzzle the minds of all who read it?”

Various other topics are now brought under discussion, such as the doctrine of an intermediate state, or a state of conscious existence between death and the resurrection; concerning which Mr. Wisehead remarks, that “this must be discarded, if we are desirous to regulate our faith by the *standard of reason*, of truth, and of Christianity,” (quoting the words of Mr. Belsham,) “and another great divine, who is venerated as the patriarch of our Unitarian Theology, gives it as his opinion, that ‘there is no more reason why a man should be supposed to have an immaterial principle than a dog§;’” and from the same rational principles he concludes against the pre-existence of Jesus Christ.

From this the parties proceed to “the obligation of Sab-

* Priestley's Letters to Dr. Horne, p. 21.

† Palmer's Inquiry, p. 447.

‡ Priestley on Necessity.

§ Priestley's Controversy with Horsley.

batical institutions," which is pronounced mere Jewish rubbish—then "the plenary inspiration of the holy Scriptures," which is deemed an error that an inquisitive and judicious Christian will see abundant reason to discard, according to Mr. Belsham's *Cautions*, p. 27. Having disposed of these matters, Mr. Wisehead takes occasion to remark, that "there are some visionary notions about intellectual happiness, swimming upon the surface of some people's brains, about a heaven, independent of a material existence; and as our *reason* will not allow us to suppose there is any existence but that which is material, so we consequently expect a material heaven, made up of some of the same enjoyments we have in our present state.

"*Consid.* Then it should seem your notions of heaven are very nearly similar to those of another great divine in the east, from whence the metaphors come, Doctor Mohammed, who was also in many other points of your way of thinking; and he was quite as much a believer in Jesus, as a great prophet, as yourselves. Count Swedenburgh has also diverted his admirers with the same sort of speculation respecting his views of a material heaven. Sir, will you entertain us a little longer with a further descant on your material heaven?

"*Wise.* Sir, though you seem to ridicule my notions of a future state, yet I shall not be afraid to give you a full view of the happiness expected after the resurrection, by those of our denomination, in the words of one of our *wisest* and most *rational* divines: [Dr. Priestley] 'The change of our condition by death, may not be so great as we are apt to imagine: as our *natures* will not be changed, but only *improved*, we have no reason to think that the future world (which will be adapted to our merely improved nature) will be materially different from this. And indeed why should we ask or expect any thing more? If we should still be obliged to provide for our subsistence by exercise or labour, is that a thing to be complained of by those who are supposed to have acquired fixed habits of industry, becoming rational beings, and who have

ever been able to bear the languor of absolute rest, or indolence? Our future happiness has with much reason been supposed to arise from an increase of knowledge. But if we should have nothing more than the means of knowledge furnished us as we have here, and be left to our own labour to find it out, is that to be complained of by those who will have acquired both a *love of truth*, and a habit of enquiring after it? To make discoveries ourselves, though the search may require time and labour, is unspeakably more pleasing than to learn every thing by the information of others. If the *immortality* that is promised to us in the Gospel, should not be *necessary* and *absolute*, and we should only have the *certain means* of making ourselves immortal, we should have much to be thankful for. What the Scriptures inform us concerning a future life, is expressed in general terms, and often in *figurative language*. A more particular knowledge of it is wisely concealed from us *.”

It is needless to lay before the reader the exclamations, and testimonies of disgust and horror which now ensued, as the Socinian creed began increasingly to develope itself. Even Madam Toogood is horrified—declares that such talk is worse than cursing and swearing—while Mr. Considerate pronounces such sort of Christianity worse than downright Deism, and thinks that nothing is now left them but positively to deny the miracles of our Lord, and the resurrection, which is still more beyond the reach of reason, than any other doctrine of revelation; and then Mr. Wisehead would become as complete a deist as Hume, Gibbon, or the vulgar blasphemous Tom Paine.

The merits of the “Improved Version,” is brought under consideration in a subsequent dialogue, and reference made to the gloss there put upon John i. 1—3; Col. i. 16, &c.; Phil. ii. 5; and various other portions of Scripture, which have more immediate reference to the divinity of the Saviour: but all

* Dr. Priestley's Sermon on the Death of Robert Robinson, p. 18.

this is preliminary to a discussion which ensues on the al. important doctrine of the priesthood of Christ; his atonement and sacrifice, which are the great subject of the epistle to the Hebrews, and I may also add, the foundation of a sinner's hope of pardon, acceptance, and eternal life. This interesting topic takes two dialogues, viz. nineteen and twenty; and it is in this part of his work that our author more especially avails himself of the labours of Drs. Wardlaw and Magee. The result of the whole discussions is thus summed up.

“Where the foundation of our hope is assailed, it becomes us to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. We have seen what Socinians make of the Scriptures: some of them they have marked by their Italics, as being of doubtful authority: others by their bad criticisms they have endeavoured to explain away: while the whole of them, as they say, were written by *inconclusive reasoners*, whose minds were *warped by prejudices*, and who were liable to be deceived; so that it would be absurd to argue with them from these premises, if they had not set us the example.

“I ask, therefore, whether there is any one of the leading truths of revelation, as in general received among Christians, which they do not deny, excepting the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead, though even in this they deny the existence of a conscious life till after the resurrection takes place. It is somewhat remarkable and curious, that while they have a right to judge of revelation by their reason, they say they believe in the resurrection from the dead. Now, I ask whether there be any one truth in the Bible more mysterious, and more completely beyond the reach of human reason, than that very doctrine; and if they, according to their assertion, are not to believe what they cannot comprehend, can we give them the least credit, when they say they believe in the resurrection from the dead?

“But it may be said, if their flat and uninteresting system has nothing in it likely to attract the notice of mankind, why enter into a tedious controversy when no bad consequences

are likely to be the result; I answer, every person has a deal of natural infidelity in his heart. Socinianism and infidelity are near akin; and it is found a convenient stage for those who want a religion which allows a nearer conformity to the world, to stop some where short of Deism; and Socinianism seems to correspond with the wishes of their hearts. As some awkward efforts have been made, and are now making, to propagate these sentiments, others should be on the alert, and watch their progress.

“ I therefore conceived, that an abridged state of the controversy, through the medium of these Dialogues, which have excited the public attention far beyond my expectations, might be of general good. Many most elaborate treatises are before the public on this controversy; but, though inestimable in themselves, they are beyond the reach of many, owing to their price, and above the capacity of the generality of readers. In these additional dialogues, I have taken some pains to compress much in a little room; and have not entered deeply into any of those criticisms which might have rendered the subject uninteresting and dry; and so far as any of my plain readers are preserved from being drawn into the fatal vortex of Socinianism, I have my reward.

“ If any of the Socinians complain of the style in which they have been treated, or of the language which has been used, they are only requested to look at their own, and to remember the heavy charges they have thought proper to exhibit against us, for our irrational idolatry (as they term it) and for our belief of many truths, which we conceive to be scriptural, though inconsistent, in their esteem, with common sense.

“ Socinians and Deists are in perfect unison with each other, respecting the natural powers of man to regulate and reform himself. Here, the Socinians, in no degree fettered by the cold consent they give to the divine records, even with the Bible before them, by denying the existence of the Holy Spirit, deny at the same time all his powerful operations on

the human heart. What a stab is this to the vital principle whereby alone we are enabled to love God! Every error is but Antinomianism in disguise. Nothing but the pure truths of the Gospel will ultimately lead to purity of life. May my dear readers prove their faith to be genuine by ever producing those ‘fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God!’ ”

Mr. Hill has two dialogues, viz. xl. and xli., entitled “Antinomianism Unmasked;” in which he is generally supposed to have very successfully combatted the system of Hyper-Calvinism, now much in vogue among the followers of the late William Huntington; and, unfortunately, not among them only, but which has also inoculated many churches both of the Pædobaptist and Anti-Pædobaptist denominations. It cannot therefore be amiss to introduce in this place, the substance of what Mr. Hill has written in the way of exposure of the system. Dialogue xl. is introduced by the following letter from a young clergyman of the name of Merryman, curate of Sandover, to an elderly minister of the name of Lovegood; and, who, by the bye, may be regarded as Mr. Hill’s representative throughout the whole of these volumes.

“MY DEAR SIR—As you allow me to consult you without reserve, and under every difficulty, I must inform you of some recent events which have filled me with the most serious apprehensions, lest the peace and prosperity which have hitherto so happily prevailed, should be interrupted by the vain-janglings of some who are attempting to make their inroads among us.

“I am quite surprised, that no body of respectable Dissenters have found their way into the town, while most of the inhabitants are in gross ignorance, excepting some Baptists, and a very few Quakers, of whom it seems there are but three families in the town. These collect together every Sunday morning, in a large room, contiguous to the house of one of them; but as they seldom have any public speaking among them, very little is known concerning them; though I fear

they are but ill-acquainted with the doctrine of the atonement, and reconciliation with God through the sacrifice of Christ; yet, I find them very kind and innocent neighbours, and am happy to treat them in return with all the civility and attention in my power. In our evening lecture, some of them frequently steal into the Chapel, and affectionately acknowledge that they receive good from what they hear.

“ I wish I could speak as favourably of the Baptists; for I fear the one depend too much on their sanctification for their justification: not a few of the others deny the need of personal sanctification altogether; though I am happy to find many favourable exceptions to the general remark. You know the character of their old minister. He has been *ringing changes*, these forty years upon *eternal justification*, and what he calls *imputed sanctification*, and the perseverance of the saints, which seems little better than a sort of inconsistent perseverance in laziness and security, after they have persuaded themselves to rest in a self-conceited confidence that they are right, without any evidence of the fact; while the practical and preceptive parts of scripture are treated by them with strange neglect.

“ It seems this old man has lately heard of some new *seceders* from the Church, with whom he is highly delighted, because they have adopted his sentiment about baptism, and have been re-baptized by immersion. One of these he has, unhappily for me, introduced into his pulpit, and curiosity has invited many to hear what this *new light* has to advance; and alas! I am sorry to say, there are some who are fascinated with, they know not what: while many artful inuendoes are introduced that they now hear the gospel fully, which was not the case before; intermixed at the same time with such horrid insinuations, as are in my opinion, most intolerably profane; that ‘ the greatest sins we can commit, can never alter our state, as it respects the covenant of grace;’ and that ‘ God can never be angry with his elect, even when they commit the worst of crimes.’

“Are we then to suppose that we are in the covenant of grace, without the grace of the covenant? and how can people in such a gracious state, be guilty of the worst of crimes? and can they imagine the holy God can so alter his nature, as to see sin, and not hate it, if he finds it even in an angel? Surely, if he pardons the criminal, he hates the crime; and can such pardoned sinners dare to ‘continue in sin, that grace may abound?’ Must not every real Christian hate the thought? I trust, the first moment I was convinced of sin, I began to dread the commission of it worse than hell itself: what then can be the use of such strange, unwarrantable expressions, but to make loose-minded people looser still, and to cause the enemies of God to blaspheme the doctrine of our free forgiveness through Jesus Christ?

“Notwithstanding their doctrine is so disgusting, as well as dangerous, the bewitchery has actually succeeded upon the minds of some. One positive old woman, whose tempers at all times are the most inconsistent and unsubdued, goes prating about the town, crying in the wretched cant of the party, that she has found out why she could never get any *comfort to her soul* under my preaching, because I insisted upon it, that ‘God’s elect should be made more holy than he himself ever designed they should be;’ and that, ‘as God has *strengthened* her faith, she shall never fear about her sins and corruptions as she has done; that she is now *sure she believes*, and therefore she is safe, and nobody shall shake her confidence any more all her days;’ while her husband says of her, ‘that she is such an arrant termagant, that she ought to be ducked every day of her life for scolding.’ I am happy, however, to find, that two or three of the most judicious and correct of the Baptists, begin to recoil at what they have lately heard, and aware of the danger that arises from preaching the mere *skeleton* truths of the gospel, without their practical effects and consequences on the heart; so that if a few of my congregation seem to be fascinated by these vain disputants, others have left them, and have forgotten the prejudices of their

education, and mean to attend the church till they can hear sounder truths at the meeting; where they have been accustomed to worship. And, although I have cause to thank God, that there is not much to be dreaded from these schismatical efforts; yet, still the plague is in a measure begun. And, as you well know how to controvert these different heresies, that have been brought forward against the plain simple truths of the gospel, I most fervently intreat you to come over and help us, and give us some sermons on these most important topics.

“ Yours,

“ H. MERRIMAN.”

Why Mr. Hill should have thought it necessary to connect the Baptists with these unscriptural and extravagant sentiments is not very manifest. He must surely have lost sight, at the moment, of his own Toplady, and Romaine, and Hawker, from whose pulpit addresses and published treatises the principles might easily be deduced, which lead to the same results. Besides, was not the renowned Dr. Crisp, to whose sermons he has had recourse for all the obnoxious tenets which he combats, a clergyman of his own church? Was he not rector of Brinkworth, in Wiltshire; and did he not live and die in the communion of the Church of England? These are facts which Mr. Hill, probably out of tenderness to his own church, would have kept out of sight; and, there appeared to him no better way of effecting this than by transferring the odium to the poor Baptists. But to proceed:

“ Mr. Lovegood’s answer to this letter was replete with all that good sense; containing at the same time such wise and pious remarks, as might naturally have been expected from him; and, to gratify the reader, those parts of it which more immediately relate to the point in hand are here transcribed.”

Mr. Lovegood observed, that whatever appearance of novelty might seem to attach itself to these new lights, it was nothing more than a revival of the same bad spirit which in a measure prevailed in the earliest ages of the primitive church. That the apostle Paul foresaw the evil, and forewarned the

elders of Ephesus of it in this strong language:—"For I know that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock," and that these their outward enemies, would not be their worst enemies; for that, "also among themselves should certain men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." That this is awfully and notoriously the case with the present set. That they regard not into what Christian societies they enter; nor yet lament, or even make it a matter of consideration, how far they may break the peace and harmony that subsist among them, by the introduction of their unjust insinuations and dogmatic assertions, if thereby they may, out of other churches, make a little party for themselves, while, like Ishmael of old, their hands are against every man, while every man's hand, in self-defence, must be against them in return.

He further observed what the apostle Jude mentioned concerning some of the same spirit; that though some may go further in these abominable ways than others, yet the core of the evil is still the same in all and among all parties who "separate themselves, not having the spirit;" and that it is peculiarly applicable to the present set; since, as far as he could learn, all of them were of one mind respecting the operations of the spirit; and that whatever some such as these might have to say, respecting the correctness of their own outward conduct and moral deportment, yet the slightest inattention to what Jude further said, "Building up yourselves on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Ghost; and keeping yourselves in the love of God," would prove a most criminal neglect; and that any disregard to such practical passages as these, especially where *progressive sanctification*, or a *growth in grace*, like the carrying on of a building, &c. were to be met with, could not but prove of the most dangerous consequences to the souls of men.

He next observed, that such spirits, while they cannot please God, because they are contrary to all men, have in general in them, such a share of positivity and self-conceit,

that it were hardly possible to do them any good; and that, therefore, the apostle's advice was the wisest, to "mark such as caused divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine they had received, and to avoid them," notwithstanding such may attempt, even with "good words and fair speeches, to deceive the hearts of the simple."

He further illustrated, how strongly the apostle noticed the danger of such a spirit, from the advice he gave to Timothy, where, after having given the same directions to him, that are to be found in all his other epistles, to attend to social and relative duties, he thus remarks:—"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the *doctrine which is according to godliness*, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmising, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness;" and no wonder that he should further say; "from such withdraw thyself."

After a few observations further on this head, he next exhorted his beloved son in the Gospel, by no means to fear a full and explicit avowal of those most glorious truths, whereby the free justification and acceptance of the ruined sinner are at once secured, through the imputed righteous and finished salvation of our Redeemer, without any previous terms, conditions, qualifications, or pre-requisites to be performed by us; and especially as from these principles, he might best maintain the creed of our personal sanctification, which must be effectually accomplished in all true believers, whereby alone the omnipotent agency of that divine Spirit is restored to us, so as to make us "dead unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ." He lastly gave a promise, that within a fortnight he should come over to Sandover, in order to correct that profane disputatious spirit, which some corrupted minds were striving to introduce.

Mr. Lovegood paid his promised visit, on which occasion he

preached, from Phil. i. 6, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

In handling his text he shewed that *sanctification is a progressive work*, and that it manifested the true unadulterated meaning of the perseverance of the saints, by their being enabled to persevere in the ways of holiness unto the end; for "he that endureth unto the end shall be saved." He shewed that the Christian life was a growing up from the state of babes to that of young men, and from young men to fathers in Christ; or to adopt a similitude borrowed from husbandry, it resembled the growth of vegetation, that of corn, for instance, where there is "first the blade, then the ear, and lastly the full corn in the ear;" and again, that believers should *grow* as the lily, and the vine, and calves of the stall. And if some might attempt to evade the force of such expressions, supposing they might refer to the gradual increase of Christ's kingdom at large, like the growth of the grain of mustard-seed, still the similitude holds good; for how is it possible for a forest to grow, if each tree of the forest do not grow also? —Does not the apostle speak of the *faith* of the Thessalonians as *growing* exceedingly? and does he not pray that "the Lord would make them to *increase* and *abound in love more and more*." Then again, respecting *hope*, does he not pray that "they might *abound in hope*, through the power of the Holy Spirit?" He shewed that the same idea of the abounding, increasing, and growing in sanctification and personal holiness was evidently held forth when we are directed to "*grow in grace*, and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Agreeable to which "the path of the just is said to shine *more and more* unto the perfect day."

This sermon gives occasion to a conversation of considerable length, in which one of the speakers personates Dr. Crisp, making use of his very language, on the subject of *eternal justification, imputed sanctification, Christ made sin, &c. &c.* which I must be excused the disagreeable task of quoting in

this place. Both the language and the sentiments are rigidly scrutinized, their contrariety to the simple style of the New Testament exposed, and their dangerous and detestable tendency pointed out, though, perhaps, not with all the energy and success which might have appeared had Mr. Hill himself been "a scribe well instructed into the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." But having dispatched Dr. Crisp, the late Dr. Hawker, of Plymouth, comes next upon the tapis, though not mentioned by name, for he was a clergyman of the Church of England, *then living*; but quotations are made from his writings, sufficiently indicative of the quarter whence they are drawn. As the doctor has given the vogue to many a pulpit in our land, it may be interesting to submit to the reader a sketch of the dialogue, beginning with the subject of *imputed sanctification*. Thus the doctor expresses himself:

"Sanctification is so far from evidencing a good state, that it darkens it rather; and a man may more clearly see Christ, when he seeth *no sanctification*, than when he doth. The *darker my sanctification is, the brighter is my justification*; for, a man cannot evidence his justification by his sanctification, but he must needs build upon his sanctification and trust in it." On this astounding assertion it is asked,

"How so? Ask the most devoted Christian upon earth whether he makes that his *confidence* (or reason of hope towards God) which he humbly receives, as an *evidence* that his heart is right with God, and that his confidence in Christ alone is correct." To which,

Malapert (a disciple of the doctor's, replies) "Why, God won't suffer his people to be over-righteous, lest they should trust in it. I heard a preacher say, 'it was *a soul-damning error* to make sanctification an evidence of justification,' and that '*the more we sinned, the more we might believe in the simple testimony of his word, who justifieth the ungodly, without any intermixture of faith and repentance, or any thing else from us.*'"

"*Lovegood*. It is truly dreadful to hear you thus denying

the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, as an evidence of the reality of our faith.

“*Mal.* No, Sir. I only say, the seal of the Spirit is limited only to the immediate witness of the Spirit; nor doth it ever witness to any work of grace upon the heart.

“*Love.* Why, then, if the Holy Spirit does not witness to his own [work of] grace upon the heart, are we to suppose he witnesseth to nothing?

“*Mal.* Why, the truth is, ‘I know I am Christ’s, not because I do crucify the lusts of the flesh, but because *I believe in Christ that crucified my lusts for me!*’—Is there any thing in the world of better credit than the Spirit? *We must not therefore try it by any thing else, or question it;* for this is the word of grace, according to which he speaks. ‘Reconciling the world unto himself, *even the world,* when men are no otherwise, but merely men of the world.’

“*Love.* Now, Sir, I think you have put your finishing stroke to what you call the witness of the Spirit. For, according to this view of the matter, even an unregenerate person may have the witness of the Spirit, though in himself earthly, sensual, and devilish—a child of the devil of the blackest sort! And thus, the pure and holy Spirit of God, and of truth itself, is most profanely supposed to witness to the most abominable lie, and to buoy up those who are of their father the devil, and in the high road to hell [with the hope of heaven]. And that, contrary to the most express testimonies of Scripture that can possibly be recorded, *e. g.* ‘If ye love me, keep my commandments,’ John xiv. 15. [‘He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him,’ ver. 21.] ‘If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him,’ ver. 23. ’Tis thus that ‘the Spirit beareth witness with our Spirits that we are the children of God.’ Can the same Spirit bear the same witness to the children of the devil?”

This leads to the notice of Dr. Hawker's gloss upon various other texts of Scripture, such as, "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord," which he thus explains, "*without Christ no man shall see God!*" And this interpretation he attempts to support by a comment equally strange on the text, "*follow peace with all men;*" that is, "follow Christ, for he is our peace"—consequently, to follow holiness means the same thing!

"*Lovegood.* How is it possible to suppose that such people can believe their own nonsense? I should be inclined to laugh at their folly, if I was not grieved at their bad design. —The word *following*, does not agree with their creed; it sounds too much like increasing, and getting nearer to a certain desired point: and as for *following peace*, divisions and disputings seem to be the first chapter in their creed: and as for holiness, what have they to do with that, while *imputed sanctification* makes up for every thing. Their perversion of such passages as these, must have the most dangerous tendency, upon the minds of such lax and wanton professors as have no heart to walk in those ways of holiness, though 'God has fore-ordained, that we should walk in them.'

"*Malapert.* Whatever you may say against the meaning of that text, a great minister in our way, in the west of England, is of the same mind: these are his words, 'It is a conceived conceit among some persons, that our obedience is the way to heaven; and that though it be not, *as they say*, the cause of our reign, yet it is the way to the kingdom. But I tell you all, that this sanctification of life is *not a jot the way* of the justified person into heaven. The truth is, since redemption is managed by Christ, the Lord hath appointed other ends and purposes of our obedience than salvation: *Salvation is not the end of any good work we do.*' You will say then, 'we had as good sit still. He that works all day, and gets nothing better than he had in the morning, had as good sit still and do nothing.' Let me tell you, the prevention of evil, *if there be any evil in it*, or the obtaining of good, *if there be reality of good*—peace of conscience, joy in

the Holy Spirit, pardon of sin, the infallibility of miscarriage, and the light of God's countenance, all these, I say, are abundantly provided for you, and established firmly on you by the mere grace of God in Christ, before ever you perform any thing whatsoever.'

"*Love.* Oh! then, by this I find I am to believe I have it before I have it; and I must not seek that I may find, because it is abundantly provided for me, and lest I should seek my own good as well as the glory of God in those blessings of grace which are so richly provided for me.—Why, all this is abundantly below common sense: it is uncommon nonsense. While your Doctor forbids me to seek that I may find, because it is *unnecessary*, God's command is, 'Seek that ye *may* find.' And because the kind donor means to do me good in the things he freely gives, I must not seek my own good in the enjoyment of it, though he designs it. The way of holiness is entirely cut up by this kind of gospel.

"*Mal.* O, Sir, it is a long established rule among all of us that the law is no rule of life to a believer; for 'we are dead to the law by the body of Christ.'

"*Love.* But, Sir, go on with the quotation, if you please; if not, I must do it for you. Why are we said to be dead to the law through the body of Christ, 'that we should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, *that we should bring forth fruit unto God*; and that we should serve in *newness of spirit*, and not in the oldness of the letter.' In short, that the spirit of obedience which we have lost by the covenant of works, should be restored to us by the covenant of grace: so that not only all needed grace should be communicated to the heart, but that whenever God sees sin in us, it may be conquered and subdued from day to day.

"*Mal.* How can God see sin in his elect? The great Doctor I so much admire, thus settles that point, by the following *noble strain of argumentation*, among those who are bold enough to believe they are the elect without evidence yea, and in spite of evidence to the contrary. 'Though such

persons do act in rebellion, yet the loathsomeness, the abominableness, and the hatefulness of this rebellion are laid on the back of Christ; he bears the *sin* as well as the blame and shame: and that is the only reason why God can dwell with those who do act the thing; and if it be asked, how should God know every sin the believer doth commit, and yet not remember them? the answer is, though God remembers the things thou hast done, yet he doth not remember them as thine; for he remembers them perfectly, they are none of thine; when he passed them over to Christ, they ceased to be thine any longer: so that the Lord hath not one sin to charge on an elect person from the first moment of conception to the last moment of life: no, nor is original sin to be laid upon him; the Lord hath laid it on Christ already: yea, every elect vessel of God, from the very first instant of his being, is as pure in the eyes of God, from the charge of sin, as he shall be in glory. And it is the voice of a *lying spirit* in your hearts that saith, that you who are believers have yet *sin wasting your consciences*, and lying as a burden too heavy for you to bear.

“*Love.* How awfully near all this daring *rant* is to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, whose sacred work it is to convince of sin, and so to reprove us for it, that we may know and feel that it is an evil and bitter thing to sin against God. Was it a lying spirit in the heart of Magdalene that made her weep much because she had sinned much? Was it a lying spirit in Peter that made him go out and *weep bitterly*? And did the Holy Ghost create a lying spirit in the hearts of three thousand believing sinners, when at the same time they cried, under the grace of repentance unto life, ‘What must we do to be saved?’ Really the common blasphemy that is to be heard in the world is as nothing when compared to the deliberate blasphemy which Antinomianism suggests. One would suppose that this profane and daring set never read what it cost David all the days of his life, after his most grievous fall, in which he so highly displeased the Lord, that the sword never

afterwards departed from his house ; how he beclouded all his own evidences, and how he went on with his broken bones to the very verge of the grave, till just at last a beam of divine light was restored to his mind, whereby he was enabled to say, ‘ thou hast made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure.’

“ *Mal.* But the great divine I have before mentioned thinks otherwise, for he thus asks the question, ‘ Was not David a justified person ? and did not he bear his own sins ? ’ ‘ My sins are gone over my head.’ To which he thus answers: ‘ I must tell you all, that what David speaks here, he speaks from himself; and all that David speaks *from himself was not truth.* David might mistake that God should charge his sin upon him:’ and also coincide with the Doctor, in what he further says: ‘ *Before* a believer doth confess his sin he may be as certain of the pardon of it, as *after* confession: that there is as much ground to be confident of the pardon of sin to a believer, as soon as ever he has committed it, though he hath not made a solemn act of confession, as to believe it after he hath performed all the humiliation in the world, even though it be *adultery and murder*, as was the case with David.’

“ *Love.* So that all the contrite language of David in the fifty-first Psalm, was not only fruitless, but the language of a *lying spirit!* What a horrid perversion of the repentance of David, and how awfully calculated to harden sinners in their transgressions!

“ *Mal.* Sir, I shall not be ashamed to tell you how finely this *free grace author* proceeds. ‘ But you will say, all the promises of pardon, do run with this proviso, in case men humble themselves—in case men do this and that—then pardon is theirs, otherwise it is none of theirs. *Take heed of such doctrine.* There is nothing but joy and gladness—there is not one jot of sadness in any believer, but he is out of the way.’ ‘ *God doth no longer stand offended. nor displeased, though a believer, after he is a believer, do sin often; because he doth not find the sin of a believer to be his own sin, but he*

finds it to be the *sin of Christ*; so that, if a man know himself to be in a state of grace, though he be drunk, or commit murder, God sees no sin in him:’ so that what signifies telling believers, except they perform such and such duties: except they walk thus and thus holily, and do these and those good works, they shall come under wrath, or at least God will be angry with them; what do we in this but abuse the Scriptures? We undo all that Christ has done—we injure believers—we tell God that he lies to his face.

“*Love.* This is separating Christ and holiness with a vengeance; and if it be not making Christ the minister of sin, I know not what is. But all this is perfectly consistent with another favourite expression of theirs, viz. ‘Sin can do a believer no harm.’

“*Mal.* No more can it: for our great Doctor has declared that ‘they need not be afraid of their sins; they that have God for their God, there is no sin that ever they commit, *can possibly do them any hurt*: therefore as their sins cannot hurt them, so there is no cause of fear in their sins committed; there is no one sin, nor all the sins together of any believer can possibly do that believer any hurt.’

“*Love.* Such dangerous and barefaced assertions against the holiness and purity of divine truth, I never before heard. To suppose that a soul may be one of the elect of God, and yet be permitted to live in the worst of sins, under the influence of the most atrocious crimes, and die in impenitence and unbelief, not only gives the lie to all Scripture, but has an immediate tendency to harden the sinner in his sins; while the whimsical idea, that Christ was actually made the sinner, while the sinner takes the Saviour’s place, not only nullifies every idea of the vicarious sacrifice of him that ‘suffered the just for the unjust,’ but equally hardens the impenitent; since they are now given to believe, that whatever sins they commit, Christ committed them for them, and that therefore *they* cannot sin, because virtually Christ sinned for them! But that the holy God should even hate and abhor his infinitely

well-beloved Son, because he who knows no sin, suffered in the sinner's stead, and was hated of God, as bad as if he had been the devil himself!—this, in my opinion is dreadfully profane [he might have added, it is the height of blasphemy.] No wonder that, from such principles, the practical truths of the Gospel should be next subjected to a most profane attack. The exhortation to ‘give all diligence to make our calling and election sure,’ is treated by men of such sentiments, as a most dangerous error, and even robbing Christ of his glory. And no wonder at the conclusion of the whole, that if the infatuated Antinomian enthusiast can, merely from the fond *fancy* of his own mind, conceit himself to be one of God's elect—he is just as safe, whether he dies a martyr at the stake, or a criminal at the gallows; for, the concluding horrible conceit is, ‘Sin can do a believer no harm; and whether he sins or serves God, it is all the same, for God sees no sin in his elect, even while they commit the worst of sins.’ Could any infidel upon earth have wished a better opportunity for the exercise of his profane ridicule on the sacred doctrine of our election in Christ, and so directly contrary to the word of God, in which the cause and effect are so solemnly united with each other; that ‘we are elect according to the fore-knowledge of God, *through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience*,’ that we are ‘saved and called with an *holy calling*’—‘predestinated to be *conformed to the image of his dear Son*,’ and that he hath chosen us ‘that we may be holy, and without blame before him in love?’ Is there one single instance throughout the Bible where election is mentioned unconnected with personal sanctification, as producing the invariable fruits and effects of righteousness upon the heart and life?”

Here the conversation ends—and Mr. Hill remarks upon it, that “should any persons ignorantly assert, that such daring and impious sentiments can be founded on what is called Calvinism, they know not what Calvinism means; for in no one instance are they correct, and this may be known from their direct opposition to each other. The system of Drs.

Crisp and Hawker is a mere caricature of Calvinism; for while the latter inculcates humility, self abasement, and an entire dependence on the agency of the Holy Spirit, and an extreme attention to the eternal obligations we are and must be under to obey the divine law: the former leads to self-confidence, presumption, and an awful neglect of moral duties. Such is the antinomianism that arminianism still suggests—speaking a language that is peculiarly profane and awfully bad.

“Let the doctrines of grace be allowed to speak their own language; and then let it be asked, if the high commanding banner against antinomianism, under every disguise, is not best established in those hands, who from this tower of divine truth, neither allow the sinner to be his own Saviour, nor can admit a salvation from the damnation that sin deserves, and not from the dominion that sin has usurped.”

The extracts now laid before the reader, from the Village Dialogues, will enable him to form his judgment of Mr. Hill's theological system. It was, what is usually termed, *moderate Calvinism*; a system which combines the doctrine of unconditional personal election with man's responsibility, and the duty of all who hear the Gospel to believe and obey it. The system of *Ultra-Calvinism*, or Antinomianism, as Mr. Hill preferred calling it, is of a most dangerous tendency: it calls upon sinners to persuade themselves that they are of the number of the elect without any evidence from Scripture, sense, or reason—their first duty is to believe that Christ is theirs, and they are his; thus building up many in the belief of a lie instead of the truth, establishing presumption upon principle, and by this means conscience itself is drawn in to be a friendly supporter of self-deceit. Nor does the evil rest there; this *presumption* of their personal interest in Christ, supersedes the necessity of “working out their own salvation with fear and trembling, and of giving diligence to make their calling and election sure, as the apostolic writers exhort believers to do.” Election is doubtless a Scripture doctrine, but no one can have any well founded evidence that he is one

of God's elect until he believes the testimony of God concerning his Son, and finds peace to his guilty conscience in the blood of atonement. "The work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ," are the only sure test that we are his real disciples, and not mere nominal professors.

SECTION VIII.

MR. HILLS' OPPOSITION TO PAROCHIAL ASSESSMENTS ON PLACES OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP—AND WRITINGS IN DEFENCE OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, A. D. 1811—1816.

IN the earlier part of the present century, a most determined effort was made to subject dissenting chapels to parochial assessments, or the payment of poor's rates, and happily the experiment was first tried with Surrey Chapel, it being of a nondescript character. Mr. Hill resisted the attempt, because he regarded it as an invasion of the Toleration Act, which his Majesty, George III., in his first speech from the throne, had pledged himself to maintain inviolable. The first attack was made at the sessions at Guildford, A. D. 1811, and from the distance of the place, subjected Mr. Hill and his friends to a considerable expense; but they succeeded in their opposition, and fondly persuaded themselves that they should hear no more of the matter. In this, however, they were mistaken—the attempt was renewed five different times, and on every occasion the parochial authorities were unsuccessful. The object being of general concern to the whole body of Protestant Dissenters, it was taken up by the society, then recently instituted, for the purpose of protecting their liberties, which greatly facilitated the means of defence.

Aware of the consequences that would result to the dissenters throughout the country, should these parish officers

succeed in their object, Mr. Hill stood forward manfully in their behalf, and on the first attempt failing, he published an elaborate pamphlet of 90 pages 8vo., entitled "A Serious Investigation of the Nature and Effects of Parochial Assessments being charged on places of Religious Worship, protected by the Act of Toleration; wherein the manifest partiality, evil tendency, and ruinous consequences of such a Taxation, are amply set forth;" first published in 1811; a second edition appeared in 1813, with additional remarks—and a third, in an altered and abridged form, in 1816.

The pamphlet is dedicated to the inhabitants of the parish of Christ Church, in Surrey, whom he compliments on the general harmony and good-will which had subsisted among affectionate neighbours and friends ever since his first residence among them, and then proceeds to express regret that any restless spirits should have recently appeared, stirring up contention and strife, as in the instance before them. "How little," says he, "do these hard-hearted disturbers of peace know or feel for the situations of hundreds of poor ministers, who can scarcely obtain their daily bread, having nothing to support them but the income arising from the place of worship in which they officiate! Let these poor ministers be deprived of so large a portion of their scanty support as parochial assessments in general demand, and they will be poor indeed! Though burning days are ended, days of starvation will be their immediate lot!"

Mr. Hill commences his pamphlet with an eulogium on the glorious Revolution, under King William III., and the establishment of religious liberty in consequence of it; lamenting that attempts were now made, as contrary to sound policy as religion, to abridge rather than to enlarge that liberty. Among these he reckons the efforts to tax places of worship; which have, in general, been deemed exempt from all parochial taxations for 120 years. He admits that, according to the act of the 43d of Elizabeth, on which our poor laws are founded, all places producing profit may be assessed; but Mr. Hill justly

observes, that meeting houses could not have been intended by that law, for none were then permitted.

Mr. Hill conceives it to be a real hardship that any persons whatever should be obliged to account to a magistrate for the *voluntary donations*, (for such they are) which are given to a place of worship, whether a ticket for a seat be given, or merely a subscription made,—every halfpenny so given having been taxed before. He remarks that in some *parochial* places of worship, the seats are let for the emolument of the preacher, or for the benefit of the proprietor, and it seems that such places are as liable to taxation as chapels and meeting-houses are. To tax the one, therefore, and not the other, appears to be partial and unfair; but, says Mr. Hill, “perhaps it is thought that Methodists and Dissenters should pay ‘smart money’ for their religion, and be exposed to an inquisitorial authority, such as bankrupts and swindlers must submit to, a specimen of which was exhibited at the late Guildford sessions.”

The hired orator for the day, on that occasion, was Mr. Spankie, now one of the representatives in parliament for the borough of Finsbury, one of the metropolitan districts. Referring to his speech, Mr. Hill thus characterizes it: “I believe never since the days of Charles II. was a more vehement philippic delivered decidedly against religious liberty; and I request the reader’s peculiar notice to this most remarkable harangue, *as the language of a party, and an exposition of their dark designs.*

“After a few high-flown compliments, as it respected my personal character, I found myself at once deprived of all my beautiful plumage, ere even I had time to admire the finery of my dress. This was a curious specimen of that low flattery resorted to by those who can smile in your face, and cut your throat with a feather; for, first he begins to flatter me as an angel—then, all at once, discerns the motives of my heart, and discovers that all these angelic actions were nothing but the artful cloak of the most devilish designs, ‘to pull down Church and State.’

“Having talked about my *munificent donations*, and (perhaps a little incautiously) virtually admitted that the profits of the chapel were devoted to *very laudable purposes*, he thus speaks out the language of his employers. He says, *those whose cause he was advocating* viewed with alarm and apprehension the splendid and benevolent donations of Mr. Hill, justly considering them as the most powerful instruments in the propaganda system of METHODISM.” Thus, says Mr. Hill, Mr. Spankie says nothing about Mr. Farquharson, his only ostensible employer, but of those “whose cause he was advocating;” while the whole of his speech indicated, that *there is a serious combination against us*. Thanks to Mr. Farquharson for employing an orator, who has informed the public, that “Methodism is propagated by splendid and benevolent donations; and thanks to Mr. Spankie for giving us a full insight into the spirit of the rest of his party, that *these pious exertions are viewed by them with alarm*, and the object of their alarm is, lest they who perform them should pull down the established church thereby !!!” Perhaps, says Mr. Hill, in a note on the place, a grosser instance of commencing a prosecution against religious people, merely for righteousness’ sake (Matt. v. 10) was never before exhibited. If such persecutors are not ashamed of a conduct so notoriously vile, it can only be attributed to the worst principles that ever disgraced the human heart. Mr. Hill then proceeds—

“I have a third time to thank Messrs. Farquharson and Co. for their redoubtable orator. The church is certainly not poor, but rich; and I can assure Mr. Spankie, that the people on whom he bestows the nick-name of Methodists, are not in the general rich, but poor. So that the church has ten times the power to outshine and outdo them in every point of view. To give therefore a little consistency to his most inconsistent harangue, we must suppose it was not the *means* but the *ends designed by the means* that met with the orator’s disapprobation. Now, I ask, if ever there was a more strange outcry raised, *The Methodists, by their charities and splendid benevo-*

lence, are drawing people from the established church; while the friends of the church are ten times as able in the use of the same means to draw them back again whenever they please!

“I next find the orator, after all the splendid compliments bestowed before, turns right about upon me, and depicts me as one of the most ostentatious hypocrites that ever appeared on the stage of religious life. ‘It was his *boast*,’ he tells the public, ‘that his influence over the minds of his followers enabled him to perform acts of *ostentatious charity*.’ So that I have been *fool enough to boast* that I have been enabled to perform acts of ostentatious charity; while Mr. Spankie has been *wise enough* to discover that boasting and ostentation were the despicable motives that influenced my heart. It shall readily be admitted, that gentlemen of the long robe are at times under the necessity of using language, on behalf of their clients, not perfectly congenial to the feelings of their own minds; but if *insults* like these are to pass for eloquence and oratory, how far the character of the gentleman and the orator are always connected with each other, may easily be determined.

“Mr. Spankie further informs the public, that ‘these acts of ostentatious charity were a gratification *I should not be allowed to indulge in*, without first contributing to the relief of the parochial poor;’ and he then adds, ‘what claim had *people of this description* to be exempted? none whatever: for he was persuaded, and many persons, and wise ones too, were of opinion that the present prevailing and increasing system of Methodism existed for the *ultimate and final destruction of the established church of England*.’ ”

Here, says Mr. Hill, we have the direct *war whoop* of prosecution completely revived! The church is in danger—down with the Methodists, or they will down with you!! But Mr. Spankie proceeds: “If a system of religion, tolerated by the mild laws of the country, was *suffered* to be extended by the most powerful incentives which could operate on the

human mind—if its ministers were to set up Methodist meeting-houses to rival the church of England—if the extraordinary and persevering zeal of those ministers was to be directed in obtaining proselytes by every *art* they could devise—if, by attractive and *seductive* meeting-houses the people of this country were to be drawn by degrees from the established faith and mode of worship, it was *impossible* to say where the evil would have *an end*, it must *inevitably terminate* in the utter annihilation of the established church!!” On this Mr. Hill sarcastically remarks, “Mr. Spankie’s ingenuity can discover where a thing will *terminate*, though no human being can discover where it *will end*!”

Another very curious flourish in this most eloquent and energetic address deserves particular notice; it is as follows: “Let not the full and splendid river of Methodistical benevolence *devour the country*, by draining the little rivulets, that should nourish and support the established church. Was it not manifest that wherever these Methodist meeting-houses existed, the worship of the established church was not held in the repute it ought to be. *Men could not serve God and Mammon*—they could not follow the doctrine of these Methodist ministers, and at the same time love and respect the regular ministers of the established church.”

In this vile fustian, the modern Tertullus certainly laid himself open to animadversion, and Mr. Hill does not spare him. He is willing to believe that Mr. Spankie was sober when he delivered himself of this strange speech, though certainly, as a halfway intoxicated theatrical lady once said of herself, “he was strangely involved in mystery.” What could influence him to represent the established church as so far exhausted of benevolence, that she had nothing but little rivulets left for her support, with all her large endowments and abundant wealth. And then to contrast her benevolence with that of poor unendowed Methodism, as a full and splendid river which was ready to *devour the country*. That a country should be *devoured by benevolence* is stranger still

but quick-thoughted orators have not time to choose apt metaphors for the purpose of illustration upon every occasion. But even this is not all; for according to Mr. Spankie, worshipping in a church is serving God—worshipping in a Methodist meeting is serving Mammon! Could any Methodist preacher have given a more ridiculous interpretation of that text? But the orator continues—“They could not follow the doctrine of these Methodist ministers, and at the same time love and respect the regular ministers of the established church.” In the name of wonder and common sense, asks Mr. Hill, why not? Let the regular ministers of the established church be as lovely in their behaviour, and as respectable in their conduct as they should be, while they fill a station so honourable and respectable in itself, and it will soon appear what love and respect they will universally command. But if people are expected to worship every thing that is cloaked in a cassock, however ignorant, profligate, or profane, the idolization of such a priesthood is not only abominable in itself, but will be the utter destruction of all the morality in the land. “Mr. Spankie, however, is of a different opinion. He tells us that ‘God and the constitution have appointed a clergy of the establishment to instruct us.’ Can any one who knows the use of brains, or reads his bible, be deluded by such sheer nonsense? Are we to believe that all national religions must be necessarily of God’s appointment? And as the British Sovereign presides over three sorts of national churches—in England, Episcopal; in Scotland, Presbyterian; and in Canada, Roman Catholic; are we to suppose with Mr. Spankie, that we are to take up with the establishment, be it what it may; and that all intermeddlings with the religion of any state, whether Popish, Mahometan, or Pagan, would be an insolent rebellion against *the appointment of God*? What disgusting trash! How utterly inconsistent with common sense! Does not every man’s reason, if he has any, tell him, that religion must be the subject of our own personal judgment and choice? If, therefore the national

church happens to be favourable to the dictates of my own conscience, it is my privilege to conform; if otherwise it is my duty to dissent. As to myself, I can solemnly declare, I love the establishment much better than many of those who live on her preferments: I cordially approve her doctrines, and her liturgy: I venerate her immortal founders: and respect and esteem many within her pale, whose holy and consistent lives, and fervent well-directed zeal would have done honour to the primitive church in her purest days. Mr. Spankie, however, in his oration which has been so widely circulated, has been pleased, contrary to every feeling of my heart, to make me the ring-leader of a sect, whose whole efforts and designs are to destroy this church, by every seductive art within their reach.

“The candid reader will have had quite enough, when he has had laid before him the following quotation: ‘However laudable the motives of Mr. Hill’s charitable donations might be, *in his own estimation*, they were exercised at the expence of the poor of the established church. Let not the methodists be molested in their worship’ (that is, do not break their windows, or dash their brains out; but tax them till they are ruined;) ‘but let them not, at the expence of the poor, augment their funds, for the purpose of employing them to *sap the foundation of the established church*’ So far our eloquent orator.

“Now, if any person can extract a single grain of common sense from this strange assertion, I shall call him the completest alchymist of the day. For, first, it should seem that we supported the poor at the expence of the poor; and then by supporting the poor in this comical manner, we sap the foundation of the established church! So that poor people, nick-named methodists, must even endanger their salvation, by their hard-heartedness in living without the exercise of charity, lest they should ‘*sap the foundation of the established church*’; or, in other words, we must be allowed to do nothing but as church-people set us the example, and direct us in the quantum

of good we may be permitted to perform, otherwise we are to be *viewed with alarm, lest even our charities should ruin the church!*"

Mr. Hill tenders a kind of apology for being compelled to say these things against Mr. Farquharson and Mr. Spankie, who, after all, are only the ostensible movers of a serious combination against the religious liberties of the land. "They have not wisely conducted their plan, they seem to suppose that declamation is to pass for argument, and abusive nick-names for eloquence. But, unfortunately for these clamorous orators, Sunday-schools and Bible-societies have led thousands to read and think for themselves; and such people will not be duped by sound without sense. In short, notwithstanding all these empty harangues, there never was a day in which a sectarian principle less divided the Christian church. Whenever people hear of a good minister, either in church, chapel, or meeting, they give their attendance; where there is a bad one, he is very justly neglected and despised. If the church wishes to be popular, and to regain her lost ground, the way is straight before her; she has every thing from the patronage of the State she could wish or desire: like our most excellent constitution, she can only be ruined by her own corruptions.

"From the whole of this counsellor's speech, which is of no other material consequence, than as it developes the persecuting designs of the high [church] party, religious people of every denomination may easily foresee the fresh storm that is gathering against them. If religious societies are not to be left at full liberty to support their own economies as they like best, without being liable to an unprecedented investigation of their private concerns, which lays them open to the most offensive publicity that can well be conceived, the religious liberty we have so long enjoyed, is now no more."

Mr. Hill proceeds to show that the real danger of the church is not from *without* but from *within*. Let all the ministers of the established church faithfully preach the doctrines they are sworn to maintain, and set an example to the flock of "all holy conversation and godliness," and the

parish churches will be revisited with unaccustomed crowds. But let any other methods be adopted, and that which is bad will soon become abundantly worse. Let the magistrates, throughout the country, join the present religious uproar, and lay a partial and persecuting taxation against those whose religious zeal makes them outshine their neighbours, and they will soon find that the church will be in much greater danger than from any cause which the *Tertullus* of the day was pleased to assign!

In an APPENDIX, Mr. Hill presents his readers with a document which had just then made its appearance, containing the regulations for the admission of persons into the Catholic chapel at Cheltenham, in which sittings of various descriptions are let: after which he indulges his comic fancy in a supposed catechisation of a Roman Catholic Priest under this new Protestant Inquisition. The thing is so exquisite that I shall submit it to the reader's inspection, merely intimating, that he has so managed the dialogue as to introduce rather archly some of Counsellor Spankie's eloquent sayings. Thus it proceeds:—

“ *Coun.* Put that gentleman to his oath.

(The oath is taken.)

“ *Coun.* Pray, Sir, what religion are you of?

“ *Priest.* Sir, I am of the Holy Catholic religion.

“ *Coun.* Do not you, Sir, officiate in a large chapel of your persuasion in ——?

“ *Priest.* Yes, Sir.

“ *Coun.* I hope, Sir, you do not mean to say that you get nothing by your religion?

“ *Priest.* Having no establishment, and consequently being deprived of all endowments, we are certainly supported by the people of our own persuasion.

“ *Coun.* I thought so, Sir. Pray do you let the seats in your chapel?

“ *Priest.* People generally come in as they like.

“ *Coun.* Are there not galleries in your chapel?

“ *Priest.* Yes, Sir.

“ *Coun.* But you will not pretend to say, that the people come into that part of your chapel as they like.

“ *Priest.* We expect they should pay if they sit in the galleries.

“ *Coun.* You *expect*, Sir. What do you mean by that? Will you say that they are allowed to sit there for nothing?

“ *Priest.* Sir, our expences are large, and they must be paid somehow.

“ *Coun.* Yes, Sir, the parish poor must be supported as well as your chapel. Come, do not give us all this trouble: you must tell us what you let your seats for.

“ *Priest.* Sir, this is a hard case; we were never called to such an account before.

“ *Coun.* You may think it hard, but you are all trying to draw away people from the established church, both Dissenters and Roman Catholics.

“ *Priest.* But you know, Sir, ours was the old established Church of England, before yours pulled it down. Surely we should not be so hard taxed for the poor, now we are so poor ourselves; while your church that overturned our church, and is so rich, may let their pews and seats as they like, and never be taxed at all.

“ *Coun.* That is nothing to the purpose; the law is that you should be taxed.

“ *Priest.* What law? we never heard of such a law before.

“ *Coun.* Sir, there has been a *new construction* put upon the *old* law, and now you are all to be taxed. We must know, Sir, the income of your chapel.

“ *Priest.* Why, Sir, in some of our chapels they pay for the best seats two guineas per annum, and others one guinea per annum.

“ *Coun.* And pray, Sir, is this all you get?

“ *Priest.* With all we get, some of our clergy find it little better than a starving.

“ *Coun.* You will never mind that. You who were so

fond of *burning* in former days, won't mind a little *starving* now-a-days. I see, Sir, in some of your chapels, there are a set of boxes put in a row. Pray what are they for?

"*Priest.* Sir, they are confession boxes.

"*Coun.* Boxes, I suppose, in which people stand to confess their sins, before you pardon them?

"*Priest.* Yes, Sir.

"*Coun.* I suppose, Sir, a considerable interest arises out of your chapel on that score also.

"*Priest.* Pray, Sir, has this *Inquisition* a right to demand an answer to such questions as these?

"*Coun.* *Inquisition*, Sir! What do you mean by calling this an *Inquisition*? Do you think you are in Spain or Portugal?

"*Priest.* Sir, there are many of the Catholic persuasion who wish the *Inquisition* was abolished, though some may approve of it; and it will be wonderful, if you gentlemen of the Protestant religion, set up another, in opposition to those who do not conform to your modes of worship; for really, this seems to me so much like an *Inquisition*, that I scarcely know where I am.

"*Coun.* I will tell you, Sir, where you are; in a Court of Justice, where you are upon your oath to answer all such questions as the Court shall demand from you. Therefore, Sir, I demand of you, when you forgive a man his sins, what do you get by it? for it is all an income arising out of your place of worship.

"*Priest.* Sir, we charge a poor man only a shilling.

"*Coun.* Only a shilling! Why that is *dog cheap*; out then I suppose when he begins upon a fresh score, you have to pardon him again, and that turns in the shillings pretty fast.

"*Priest.* Sir, we do not expect the poor to confess more than three times in the year, except for some crimes against the church.

"*Coun.* But then, when you have to attend on the rich sinners who come to confession, we are not to conclude that

you forgive them their sins at so cheap a rate; and especially, as they take up a deal of *their* time in committing their sins, so it must take up a deal of *your* time in hearing the confession of them?

“*Priest.* Sir, it is left optional; the rich really do not come to confession so often as they should.

“*Coun.* But, when they do come, perhaps, they lump all their sins together, and pay for absolution accordingly a good round sum, or they do not deserve a pardon?

“*Priest.* Really, Sir, these are hard questions.

“*Coun.* You may think so, Sir; but I have a few more hard questions to ask you before I have done with you. When one of your flock dies, you say he goes to purgatory?

“*Priest.* Yes, Sir; that is a part of the faith belonging to the Catholic Church.

“*Coun.* What then, after all your pardons and absolutions, cannot you clear him straight to heaven, without his first touching at purgatory?

“*Priest.* Sir, the Catholic Church has determined, that the sacrifice of the mass is necessary to redeem souls out of purgatory.

“*Coun.* You have good pickings then, it should seem both from the rich and the poor, from the living and the dead; especially in saying of masses for them after they are gone to purgatory!

“*Priest.* Sir, I acknowledge there are considerable advantages derived to the Holy Catholic Church by these sacrifices and oblations. And, as the rich are not so attentive to their duty while they live, it is expected they should make it up to us when they die; they cannot expect the blessings of the Catholic religion to be conferred upon them for a trifle.

“*Coun.* Now, as all these are so many profits and advantages arising from the different services performed in your chapel, and I am told there are many others also; all we want to know is the income produced by it, that we may know what you are to be rated, as an assessment for the parochial poor?”

This is followed up by another specimen, in which a Protestant Dissenter is tested by a similar catechisation from Mr. Counsellor Spankie, "in the ever memorable year of religious liberty, 1812," but though equally curious with that of the Catholic Priest, now given, it is too much extended to admit of insertion in this memoir; it occupies about thirteen pages of Mr. Hill's pamphlet. In the latter, the chairman is made to interfere and rebuke Mr. Spankie for his intolerant language, about not *suffering* what the Toleration Act positively allows. In a foot-note on the passage, Mr. Hill remarks, "It is a strange thing to hear a writer in the Morning Chronicle [which Mr. S. was at that time well known to be, and to have long been] talking in this way; but it is no new remark that those who are loudest in the clamours for liberty, are the most intolerant and oppressive when in power. The true spirit which actuates such persons, is merely an impatience of insubordination, and a desire to throw the yoke off their own necks, that they may fix it upon other people. The French Revolution has well developed this character."

There can be no doubt that this was a critical moment for the protestant dissenters of this country; it brought them fairly into collision with the high-church party, who clearly saw that the Bible and Missionary and Sunday School Societies were spreading their influence throughout the country, greatly to the injury of the established order of things. But an application to Parliament was made a little before the end of the reign of George III. entitled "An Act to repeal certain Acts, and amend other Acts relating to Religious Worship and Assemblies, and Persons teaching and preaching therein," (Statute 52 Geo. III. cap. 155), which operated as a considerable boon to the dissenters; and Mr. Hill notices it at the close of his pamphlet with evident satisfaction. "Our religious privileges," says he, "were always great; but now greater still, since the passing of the Religious Worship Act: we have scarcely any thing left to excite our fears, while we have the highest cause of respect and gratitude to our governors; and thankfulness

before God. May our affectionate obedience keep pace with the privileges we so amply enjoy !”

As the parish authorities, actuated by others behind the scenes, continued to manifest a disposition to harrass the dissenters with parochial assessments after numerous defeats, Mr. Hill published, in 1816, a pamphlet of 55 pages, 8vo. entitled “ Religious Freedom in Danger, or the Toleration Act Invaded, &c. &c. ;” in which he repeats many things he had said in his former writings on this subject, with additional arguments ; and for which, as well as for all his exertions in this cause, the dissenters are under great obligations to his memory. In the last tract, he says, “ though the efforts of our adversaries have been five times baffled, and sufficient evidence has been given, how disgusting such a conduct is to the neighbourhood at large, yet the same odious efforts are to be continued by them, even a *sixth* time over.

“ While we are thus obliged to resist, as long as we are thus attacked, I shall be happy to convince my kind neighbours, that it is nothing like a peevish obstinacy, or a mean attempt to save ourselves from the charge of a parochial assessment, but from a much higher and more important consideration. If we yield, our mean submission would be the prelude of a universal attack which would prove vexatious to all, and utterly ruinous to poorer congregations, who have scarcely the means to support themselves. And that this is the real design of our persecutors is evident, by their anonymous papers, which have appeared in the public prints, though they are ashamed of their names, yet the war-whoop of persecution they are not ashamed to utter. The old cry, that the church and state are in danger, if sectaries and separatists are permitted to prevail, is loudly raised, while they suppose, that such a persecuting taxation may succeed beyond a thousand arguments which they presume not to produce. For these reasons we resist, and shall resist this cruel attack in all its stages.

‘ As to myself, though I am not obliged to satisfy every

impertinent enquirer; yet if any one supposes I am making a purse by my winter's residence at Surrey Chapel, they may be assured a considerable surplus is required out of my own private fortune to discharge all the demands that are made upon me from day to day, from the situation I am called to fill. I shall, therefore, never think it necessary to embarrass myself with a larger share of such expences, not only because it is not needed; but because I do not chuse to deny myself a privilege that I have ever yet enjoyed, namely, of lending my aid to other charitable institutions, and of making all my labours, when absent from town, perfectly gratuitous wherever I am called to serve. The tongue of unprovoked slander has called from me this vindication of myself."

SECTION IX.

MR. HILL'S SERMON PREACHED BEFORE THE VOLUNTEERS—HIS
SERMON BEFORE THE LONDON MISSIONARY SOCIETY—AND
HIS MINOR TRACTS.

It was in the year of 1803, after a short truce of about eighteen months, that an end was put to the peace of Amiens, and hostilities were renewed between France and England. Napoleon Bonaparte, hitherto first consul of France, had by a series of military exploits, unexampled in history, greatly consolidated his power, and the continental states were, one and all, become his vassals. To adopt the language of the Prophet Isaiah, "he had removed the bounds of the people, and robbed them of their treasures, and put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: his hand had found as a nest the riches of the people, and as one gathereth eggs that are left, so had he gathered all the earth, and," of all the sovereigns of the continent of Europe, "there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped," ch. x. 13, 14. Great

Britain alone maintained her independency; and because she refused to submit to his dictation, the infatuated despot now publicly avowed his determination to attempt the invasion of England. He did not affect to conceal the dangers which must attend such an enterprise: he frankly owned that the chances were a hundred to one against him, that he and the greatest part of his expedition would go to the bottom of the sea; nevertheless he was bent upon it.

To meet this threatened danger, the country rose as one man; volunteer companies were formed in every district; and the ministers of religion exerted their eloquence to stimulate their zeal and courage. Among others, Mr. Hill came prominently forward, to shew his patriotism; and on the 4th of December, 1803, preached a sermon, at Surrey Chapel, primarily designed for the benefit of such of his stated hearers as had buckled on their armour in their country's defence; but the intimation having gone abroad of what was intended, the place became thronged with volunteers from other quarters, much to the preacher's surprise and gratification. Mr. Hill afterwards published the sermon, and dedicated it "to the Volunteers residing in and about the metropolis, who assembled on the occasion," *with the Author's most affectionate respects*. An extract from the Dedication will give the reader some idea of what Mr. Hill's feelings and impressions were at the time of addressing them. Thus he writes,

"Gentlemen. When I first submitted to the request of some of your body, to preach a Sermon to Volunteers, I had no conception that I should be honoured with a much larger number than what might be collected from among those who statedly attend at this chapel, conjoined with some others of their comrades who might also reside in the vicinage. It was therefore far beyond my expectation, when I found myself favoured with such a numerous and respectable attendance collected from every quarter of the city, belonging to your truly patriotic body.

"At the same time I have to acknowledge, that your very

respectable appearance, your becoming deportment while in the house of God, and especially the truly serious and animated manner in which you all stood up to sing the high praises of our God, filled me with solemn surprise, and exhibited before me one of the most affecting scenes I think I ever beheld.— Could I have foreseen the full extent of the desires of so many patriots, who have made such costly sacrifices for the public good, I certainly should have provided better for some who were disappointed of their accommodations, from the intrusion of those whose curiosity unhappily prevented the attending of a larger number of your brethren in arms. By this circumstance, the shades of the evening came upon us, not leaving sufficient time for the public service which was then before us; and finding, from the press of the people, the utter impracticability of introducing the necessary lights, and fearing what might be the consequence of dismissing so large an assemblage when the evening was entirely closed, I was not only under the necessity of adopting some considerable abridgments towards the latter end of the discourse, but also of finishing the Sermon in such a manner as must have appeared to my auditory somewhat abrupt and confused.

“ It is principally for this cause, connected with the request of many of my hearers, conjoined also with the idea that a multitude fully equal to those who attended, could not gain admittance, that the Sermon then preached is now corrected and enlarged for the public perusal, according to its original design. A further reason may also be assigned, why this humble attempt should appear in print: A great number of our national defenders are connected with many of the dissenting congregations belonging to this city. These make it a point, and would to God that others, who boast of being members of the established church, followed their praiseworthy example, regularly to attend the communion [administration of the Lord's Supper] which in general is done in the afternoon of the first Sabbath of every month; and I am sorry, out of respect to that body of our fellow-Christians, I was not

apprised of this objection before it was too late to recall my intention, without creating considerable confusion among others, as public notice of this design had spread itself more widely than could be recalled. And surely never was the time in which we were called upon to manifest the mild and excellent tempers of the Gospel, more than in the present day, when all parties, without the least distinction, come forth as one body to support the constitutional liberties of our land against a foreign foe.

“ I conceive these hints not irrelevant among you, gentlemen, who came to Surrey Chapel, as one body, to testify a solemn sense of the fear of God, of your united loyalty and patriotism under the present emergency of our public affairs: and should this unhappy war continue, and our lives be preserved, I indulge the hope that an Annual Sermon on the like occasion would not be unacceptable, when the whole chapel will be devoted to that service, better order be preserved, and highest respect manifested to all those who fear God and honour the king.

“ I am, Gentlemen,

“ Affectionately and respectfully,

“ Yours, &c.

“ R. HILL.”

“ Surrey Chapel, Dec. 10, 1803.”

Mr. Hill took for his text, Psalm xx. ver. 7 and 8, “ Some trust in chariots, and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought low and fallen; but we are risen and stand upright:” And thus the Sermon commences.

“ It is with no mean design of flattery, when I confess the feelings of my heart; how highly I acknowledge myself honoured by such a large and respectable assemblage of Volunteers, who have spontaneously collected themselves together under this roof; far more respect than I can pay is your due. We behold you as the kind defenders of our country, and highly honour your patriotic zeal; you are

making costly sacrifices of a considerable degree of your domestic happiness and repose. Many of you are blessed with beloved companions in life ; and your children, the pledges of your mutual love, are growing up like olive-branches around your tables, and entwine about your hearts with much endearing solicitude. A large share of your pleasant intercourse with these, you are already obliged to forego, while no inconsiderable portion of your time, which otherwise would be devoted to their maintenance, you are under the necessity of resigning. Still far greater sacrifices than these may be demanded of you ; but it is to your prowess, under the divine blessing, their delicate and tender frames look up for protection and support.

“ Let it be remembered, however, that you are called forward as the defenders of your country, under the most pressing and peculiar circumstances the nation ever yet beheld ; and as the cause is the most urgent, your zeal should be the most ardent. You have to counteract the designs of that cruel tyrant, that plunderer of Europe, who talks of liberty, and entails slavery wherever he can reach them by the rod of his power, and spares none who are obliged to submit to his despotic sway. Our property is no longer ours but his, the moment he becomes the conqueror of our happy land.

“ Again, I address you as the honourable defenders of female delicacy and decrepit age. What lawless violence, what wanton cruelty have we heard of, almost from every quarter where the victorious tyrant has been permitted to prevail ; and what warmth of gratitude should we feel when old age begins to creep upon us, and our blood is felt to chill in our veins, that, by the prowess of your youthful vigour, we are defended and permitted peaceably to lay down our hoary heads in the grave. The more imminent, however, our dangers may be, the more highly the public are indebted to you for your zeal and courage, who now stand forth as the bulwark and defenders of the nation. May our most fervent

prayers never be wanting on your behalf, that your persons may be mercifully protected, and your patriotic zeal crowned with all the success your hearts could wish.

“But let it be remembered we are now in the house of the Most High and holy God, and for public worship before HIM—who is the searcher of all hearts, it is therefore my intention to take up your time no further than present circumstances may render it necessary, as relates to those things that are military and political. Subjects of this kind can seldom be deemed proper for the pulpit, while others of infinite importance are perpetually before us.

“I can only, therefore, hint, that the cause you have to sustain is the most just and necessary in itself, but that the happy existence of your families exists with it. While you exert yourselves for the public good, it is for your own good also. All the property you can obtain by your honest industry, sobriety, and attention, is now at stake; the commercial spirit of the nation is its glory: when despoiled of this we lose our all. And I mean not flattery when I further observe, that much of the good of the nation arises from this sort of mutual confidence and intercourse with each other. A life of laziness and dissipation is a life of wickedness. Proud, indeed, is that man, and not less ignorant than proud, who looks with any degree of indifference and contempt upon those who, in their honourable mercantile concerns, let the world know, that if there be more virtue among some than others, it is most frequently found to exist with those who are in habits of mutual intercourse and commerce with each other.

“You have the honour to be called forth as the champions and defenders of our civil constitution, the excellency of which has rendered us the envy and admiration of the world. Among all the foreign correspondents that have fallen to my lot, their language to me has been, ‘the people of your happy island.’ And to what cause must this be attributed? To the well-framed equipoise interwoven in the excellent government of our land. And the history of our own country, while its

constitutional government was properly attended to, bespeaks its praise. What I now say respecting our civil government, I speak in the sincerity of my heart. I am glad that we have an hereditary Monarch to fill the throne. I am glad that the rich men of the nation, possessed of much landed property, compose a House of Lords, and are the hereditary senators of the land, to form a balance in our civil power; and I am glad the people have their elective representatives in the House of Commons on their behalf.

“Observe now the excellency of this well-framed constitution, and you must admire it. The throne is hereditary; otherwise, in our nation, the cabals for its successor would be endless and dangerous in a high degree. Absolute monarchy frequently degenerates into oppressive tyranny; but this is counteracted by the Lords; they have power to defend the liberties of the land, for they are hereditary—they cannot be deprived of their legislative authority; and from the same principle, it is their interest also; and while these arbitrate between the King and the Commons, it is acknowledged that much oppression frequently arises, so corrupted is human nature, from the pride of aristocratic power. All these evils the Commons can correct; the property of the nation is entirely entrusted with them, while all the capricious consequences of a republican spirit are corrected by the controlling power of the Lords, and the executive authority of the Crown. Thus we have all that which corrects the evils as they are found to exist in different forms of government, while the power and strength of the whole are beautifully blended together, and conjoined in one.

“Let me next call to your recollection the scenes that have been exhibited in a neighbouring nation. Let their state be contrasted with ours. Notwithstanding the long scourge of war, we know the happiness we still enjoy. They once were blessed with a King, and a patriotic King, as well as ourselves. He convened his subjects [adverting to the assembling of the States General, or National Convention] and

into their hands he resigned all the offensive prerogatives of the Crown. But, alas for their ingratitude ! When he found his kingly power annihilated all but in name, no wonder if he attempted to regain so much of the power of the crown which he had a right to enjoy, and which he only wished to exert for the people's good ; and for those supposed crimes he was led to the block, to become the murdered victim of the people's tyrannic pride ; for princes and people (such is the corruption of human nature) can play the tyrant by turns. And who rules them now ? What has all their revolutionary madness produced among them ? Scarce the semblance of liberty has the present tyrant left them to enjoy. Oh, let me, from these hints, as it respects the present state of the world, advise the most respectable company of soldiers I ever beheld, to be well grounded in the knowledge of our constitutional liberties, that you may all esteem it among the first of your privileges, to stand forward in their defence. Thus equally defended from anarchy and slavery, may we be truly grateful for the privileges of the happy country in which our lot is cast.

“ We have now sufficient evidence that the proud tyrant against whom we fight, will never rest till every country he can reach becomes the abject slave of his ambitious power we therefore must resist or be ruined. Still may you take courage, and rest yourselves on God. Did you ever stand by the ocean after a tremendous storm ? Did you ever watch the vast impetuosity of the waves as they lift themselves up against those firm rocks appointed by Providence to resist the proudest of them ? Their resistance being made, they retire, and are lost in the bed of the ocean. So, stand but for a while and view the present crisis of our public affairs, and I trust you will behold these proud waves which now attempt to dash themselves against our British shore, retiring back again into that ocean from whence with so much impetuosity they arose, leaving nothing but their unavailing froth behind.

“ After all, war is one of the greatest evils we can possibly

sustain, though it be a most just and righteous punishment from the hand of God. He has a right to chastise, and we have no right to complain. I well recollect what my heart felt when I first appeared in this place, and what a pensive sabbath I then spent, after the die was cast that war was to recommence. I felt for our British youth exceedingly. I know the dangers and temptations to which they are exposed in the military line, and what grace is needed to preserve them from those scenes of riot and dissipation, which are infinitely more dangerous to the morals of the rising generation, than the sword itself can be to their persons in the hottest day of battle. When people are given over to follow the corruptions of their polluted hearts, far more evils arise against themselves from the abounding profligacy of manners, than can ever follow from the curse of war itself. O that you, my dear young friends and protectors, may be mercifully protected and preserved from all those dangers to which you are now exposed; that while you are showing a zeal so highly commendable, in fighting for your King and your country's cause, you may never forget to take unto yourselves the whole armour of God—the shield of faith, the sword of the Spirit, the helmet of salvation; that you may be enabled to fight the good fight of faith, till you have finished the well-fought day, and ultimately are enabled to lay hold of eternal life. Such are the glorious blessings promised to the Christian Soldier, by that God who cannot lie: the strength of his arm and power of his love shall never be wanting to make us more than conquerors, while with holy confidence and devotedness of heart, we rest our souls on him." Thus far Mr. Hill.

I am induced to give this copious extract from the exordium of his sermon, in order that the reader may have a fair opportunity of forming his estimate of Mr. Hill's *patriotism*, which no other part of his writings furnishes—at least in so ample a manner. Eccentric as he certainly was in many things, he was on this point sound and orthodox! His views of the theory of the British Constitution, and of its adaptedness to

secure the political liberties and happiness of the governed, are in perfect unison with those of our most enlightened statesmen; and his decided attachment to it, as well as to the land of his fathers—is worthy of a Briton. The counsel tendered to the defenders of his country is excellent, and sufficiently indicates that he was second to no one in the *amor patriæ*. In the course of his sermon he glances at “a certain set of things called philosophers in France, of whom the infidel Volney was their great Apollo,”—and of which detested cast was “that low infidel, Paine—a daring incendiary, whose design was to make us as miserable in England by his mad politics, as they have made themselves in France—a mere vulgar pot-house sot! This is the oracle who was to reform the world in religion and politics.”

Mr. Hill's sermon contains some admirable observations on the demoralizing tendency of the principles of infidelity, in proof of which he appeals to the anarchy and confusion and wide spreading desolation which had been the bitter fruits created by them in France. He then reverses the picture, and shows how divinely adapted the Gospel is to counteract the corruption of human nature, sanctify the depraved hearts of men, to turn lions into lambs, and monsters in human shapes into men. He looks to the consequences produced in France by the annulling of the sabbath, and exclaims, “O the profanation of the sabbath! and I had almost said, the infinite evils produced thereby. And will they not be infinite in the direful consequences of their future effects? Even in a political point of view, we discover that every nation rises or falls, according as the sabbath day is kept or profaned among them. If the service of God be neglected on the day of his own appointment, it is sure to be neglected altogether, and it is an established fact, that the common rules of civilization begin to deteriorate where the Christian dispensation is brought into neglect. In Christianity alone the highest state of civilization is to be found. Look with holy pity on that nation, which for a while had erased their sabbaths from their

calendar, with the impious design that the name of Christianity might be forgotten throughout the land."

The sermon concludes with the following pious benediction: "Having thus addressed you in the fear of God—excuse the feebleness of this my humble attempt, and accept this free-will offering as that which comes from the heart and spirit of one, who loves you for your zeal, and prays constantly for your protection, before him who is our confidence and strength. May more than the profession—may the possession of Christianity be the glory and blessing of all your hearts. Let this be the principal ornamental character that belongs to you that you fear God and reverence his word. Thus may you all live to give glory to his great name, and may all the praise be ascribed to HIM from whom all our protection is vouchsafed. Yea, may the richest abundance of his blessings be upon you for his name's sake, Amen."

At the close of the sermon the following hymn, composed by Mr. Hill for the occasion, was sung by the congregation, all standing, and it deserves a place in this memoir, as a specimen of his powers of versification.

THE KINGDOM OF IMMANUEL EXALTED

WHEN Jesus first at heaven's command,
Descended from his azure Throne,
Attending angels join'd his praise,
Who claim'd the kingdoms for his own.
Hail Immanuel—Immanuel we'll adore,
And sound his fame from shore to shore.

Girt with omnipotence supreme,
The powers of darkness trembling stood
To hear the dire decree and feel—
The vengeance of the mighty God!
Hail Immanuel, &c.

Not with the sword that warrior's wear,
But with a sceptre dipt in blood,
He bends the nations to obey,
And rules them by the love of God.
Hail Immanuel, &c.

Oh may the memory of his name,
 Inspire our armies for the fight ;
 Our vaunting foes shall die with shame,
 Or quit our coasts with hasty flight.
 Hail Immanuel, &c.

In his salvation is our boast,
 And in the strength of Israel's God,
 Our troops shall lift their banners high ;
 Our navies spread their flags abroad.
 Hail Immanuel, &c.

Soon may the Kingdoms of the earth
 From sin and Satan's dreadful thrall,
 By thy great power and grace be freed,
 And Christ alone be all in all.
 Hail Immanuel, &c.

Ride on and prosper King of kings,
 Till all the powers of hell resign
 Their dreadful trophies at thy feet,
 And everlasting praise be thine.
 Hail Immanuel, &c.

It may not be irrelevant to observe that the above poem was originally composed for the use of the Missionary Society, and is to be found in the Evangelical Magazine, vol. 5, p. 263, but in a different shape. The first three stanzas are the same ; but in place of the fourth, fifth, and sixth, the Missionary Hymn has the following :—

Ride on and prosper, King of kings
 Till all the powers of hell, resign
 Their dreadful trophies at thy feet,
 And everlasting praise be thine.

Go with thy servants, gracious Lord,
 And bid them tread the tempter down ;
 Be more than conquerors by thy word,
 And wear the universal crown.

Soon shall the monster sin submit
 His hateful sceptre to thy call ;
 Death and death's author soon shall die,
 And Jesus Christ be All in All.

R. HILL.

The interest which Mr. Hill took in all the concerns of the London Missionary Society is too well known by the present generation, to render any detailed account of the matter necessary in this place. It was in the year 1794, that this important enterprise was first taken up, and the attention of the religious public pointedly called to it by means of an Address to Professors of the Gospel, drawn up by the late Dr. Bogue, of Gosport, and published in the columns of the Evangelical Magazine, for September, of the same year. On the 4th of November following, the first concerted meeting, with a view to the formation of a society, took place. Early in January, 1795, the few ministers who had associated themselves at the first meeting, resolved to try the disposition, and call in the aid of evangelical ministers in London, for which purpose they prepared and printed a second Address, on the subject of Missions to the Heathen, which was not only published in the Evangelical Magazine, but also distributed privately, accompanied by a written letter, inviting them to a meeting to be held on the 15th of January, with a view to ulterior proceedings. From this time till the month of September, meetings were multiplied in abundance, and the society gained increasing strength. It was therefore resolved to commence operations without further delay, and on Monday evening, the 21st of September, the first general meeting was held, and arrangements made for six public services of religion on the three following days. On Tuesday morning, Sept. 22d, Mr. Haweis, of Aldwinkle, preached at the Spa-fields Chapel, and Mr. George Burder, in the evening at Crown-court. On Wednesday morning, the 23d, Mr. Greathead, of Woburn, preached at Haberdashers' Hall; and in the evening, Mr. Hey, of Bristol, at the Tabernacle, Finsbury. On Thursday morning, Mr. Rowland Hill preached at Surrey Chapel; and in the evening, Mr. Bogue, of Gosport, at Tottenham Court Chapel. All the meetings were exceedingly crowded, a great number of persons were unable to gain admission: about two hundred ministers were present on these

occasions. The intervals of worship were employed in constituting the society.

Having thus glanced at the formation of this society, I return to Mr. Hill's sermon delivered on that occasion. He entitled it, as it issued from the press, "Glorious Displays of Gospel Grace;" and the text was Matt. xxiv. 14, "The Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end come." The following advertisement was prefixed to the printed copies: "The public are requested to notice, that this sermon was entirely extempore; the preacher, not in the least supposing it would be demanded for public inspection, had nothing before him but a few references to different passages of scripture; and that the short-hand-writer could scarce preserve a quarter of what was then delivered, as from the multitudes that attended, he was placed in a situation in which he had neither room to write, nor an opportunity distinctly to hear. The preacher, however, has done his best in recollecting what was then delivered; and has preserved to the utmost of his power, the free, plain, extempore style of his sermon. Nor has he conceived himself at liberty to add a new thought to the subject, but as he was compelled by necessity, either to keep up the connexion, or from the scantiness of the materials he had for the work."

Although the Sermon cannot be reckoned among Mr. Hill's ablest pulpit addresses, there are to be found in it some redeeming points, and to rescue it from the oblivion into which, after an interval of forty years, it is in danger of sinking, I shall submit to the reader an epitome of its contents.

After expressing the deep convictions of his mind of the solemnity of the present occasion, he proceeds to remark that "matters of salvation are of infinite importance. The glory of bringing souls to Christ is the greatest honour God can confer upon us; since the salvation of one soul is of more worth than a thousand worlds. While you thus assemble on the business of sending the gospel to the heathen nations, may you be so

filled with the Spirit and power from above, as that you may be a thousand times more successful, not only in promoting good among those whom you are more immediately concerned to serve in the ministry of the word, but also for the conversion of the *poor heathens in your neighbourhood*; for, alas! what crowds of heathens, and worse than heathens, though under the Christian name, are every where to be found amongst us! And why may we not expect that such a fire shall now be kindled, as that not only wonders may be done among those nations that know not God, but that even in our own land, it shall be our portion also to be indulged with a remarkable revival of the power of religion, ‘a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.’

“What littleness and insignificance are stamped on all the things of time and sense, when compared to such blessings as these! what avail the things that are temporal in comparison of those that are eternal! Here are glories that words can never teach, nor tongue express; and I wonder not at the sensations of one happy mind, who though quite in the agonies of dissolving nature, and beyond the power of giving an intelligible answer to any question asked, yet, with a hope full of immortality, though in the arms of death, exclaimed, ‘O the glories! O the glories! O the glories!’ Now to be made the happy instruments of conveying so much felicity, in such solemn circumstances, as this dying man felt, what an honour! While we live, may God fill our hearts with these surprising glories, that they may be our cordial in our departing moments; and may divine mercy teach a world of sinners to seek the same! We shall then not blush, at what the world calls the irregularity of our conduct. When an apostolic warmth of zeal shall make every minister a missionary around his own neighbourhood; and when touched with the sacred tenderness of Christian compassion, he can never be contented while on earth, to leave a single sinner, within his reach, unconverted to God.

“The words of the text give us to understand, that as

wonders have been done in former ages by the Gospel, so in future, still greater glories shall be accomplished—"the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, or his ear waxed dull that it cannot hear;" and the time is still to come when "the knowledge of God shall cover the earth, as the waters do the sea," when "the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ."

Mr. Hill's general plan is to trace throughout the pages of the inspired writings, "the out-pourings of the Spirit in different ages, under the divine manifestation of mercy to mankind," in the view of enlarging the hearts of his numerous audience, in quickening their hopes at the present crisis. The first, in respect of priority as to time, and indeed as being the source from which all the rest issued, is the gracious promise of *the seed of the woman*, made to our offending first parents immediately after the fall, "but limited to a narrow channel throughout the Antediluvian world, the knowledge and fear of God being preserved in the family of Noah alone." He pursues this stream of promise in the person of Abraham, and in the covenant made with him and his posterity: in the displays of divine power and mercy accompanying the deliverance out of Egypt; in the revivals that succeeded, through the zeal and intrepidity of Caleb and Joshua; then under the Judges; under the regency of Samuel; in the increasing glories which rested on the church, during the reign of David, and the still greater glory of the first years of Solomon; in the revivals which commenced under Asa, and were kept alive under his son Jehosaphat; in the glorious days of good king Hezekiah, and of the young Josiah. He adverts to the period of the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and what took place under the government of Ezra and Nehemiah, which was succeeded by a long and gloomy night of darkness, during which the Spirit of prophecy was totally withdrawn.

At length the dawn appears—John the Baptist is raised up to preach the doctrine of repentance and announce the advent

of the Messiah, the hope of Israel, the desire of all nations. Thus did the harbinger *prepare the way of the Lord*. And now we contemplate the glories of that bright day created by the manifestation of him who is *the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*. It was natural to expect that when Jehovah incarnate, the Son of God, commenced a preacher of the everlasting Gospel, wonders would be wrought, and not a hearer resist the word spoken. But though "he spake as never man spake;" and though "he had multitudes for his hearers, insomuch that he was obliged to take the mountain for his pulpit; though he went about from village to village, and from city to city, to preach the Gospel of the kingdom, we find no more, after his crucifixion, than a hundred and twenty souls collected together in an upper room, for fear of the Jews. How shall we account for this? Why, 'the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.' He must first put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, before the effects of his work could fully appear. It was not meet that the blessing should be vouchsafed till the curse was removed; but when once the great work was finished, and Jesus had ascended to the throne of his kingdom in the heavens, according to the glorious word 'Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in'—when he had finished his conquests, and had ascended up on high, 'leading even captivity captive,' then came the blessed time when he would 'give gifts unto men, even the rebellious, and come and dwell amongst them.'

"Thus having prepared the mansions for his people, he next sends down his Spirit to prepare his people for those mansions. O the glories of that sacred day! 'behold, now indeed, the tabernacle of God is with man.' According to our Lord's direction, the disciples waited at Jerusalem for the fulfilment of his promise, and lo! he comes—their understandings are enlightened to understand the Scriptures, their hearts are inflamed, and they preach the word with faithfulness and power.

Previous to this, neither the thunders of the Baptist preaching in the wilderness, nor yet the words of grace which dropt from the lips of Christ himself, could effectually reach conviction to the minds of almost any; but now the preaching of a poor set of illiterate fishermen melts the adamantine hearts of the murderers of Christ, and brings them by thousands to submit to his righteous and merciful sceptre. On the very first day after the day of Pentecost was fully come, we hear of three thousand; at another time we hear the numbers increased to five thousand; then again, that believers were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women: and further, 'the number of the disciples multiplied greatly;' and, what was the greatest wonder of all wonders, that 'a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.' Yea, we hear of whole villages, towns, cities, countries which at once were subjugated to the Lord Jesus, 'so mightily grew the word of God, and prevailed.'

"But what was the doctrine, especially in the great revival on the day of Pentecost? The plain simple preaching of the cross of Christ. And who were the instruments employed? A company of plain illiterate fishermen. Better a thousand times to have the simplicity of a Peter than the eloquence of a Longinus, if we are but made useful to the souls of our fellow creatures! That preaching is always best, which best answers the end of preaching. Let us, therefore, go forth preaching *the Gospel of the kingdom*, as it is expressed in my text, and that too with simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, and what has been done in the ages that are past, shall be done again. God will ever stand by his own truth; and if he be for us, who can be against us? I hate the pride of such as would fain set aside this glorious dispensation, and are ever attempting to establish, what they call the powers of reason, in its stead, and are ever boasting of the mighty things that it can effect. Where are the converts of these boasted rational preachers? A fig for all their pretensions to wisdom, if they cannot produce one single

sample of a precious soul being thereby converted from sin to God.

“ I bring forward the character of the great Mr. Whitefield on this occasion. I hope you do not blush for me that I mention his name on this subject, for verily I shall not blush for myself. God gave him a most enlarged mind, and liberated him from all the wretched trammels of education. He knew no party; his glory was to preach the Gospel to every creature. Bigotry his soul abhorred; and like a second Sampson, he has so made her main supporting pillars to totter, that you and I, my brethren, rejoice that she trembles to the very foundation, and daily live in hope that her complete destruction shall complete our joy.

Now, though I cannot thank the devil for any thing, yet I will say, I thank God for that permissive Providence, whereby that great man being turned out of the churches, esteemed it his duty to preach at large. His first attempt was among the poor Kingswood colliers, and I defy any missionary upon earth to find a darker spot, or to visit a more benighted people. These he called out of the holes and dens of the earth, and to these he preached “ repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.” And, Oh, it was a lovely sight to behold the glorious effect! Eyes unaccustomed to weep before, now began to flow with the tears of repentance unto life, white streaks appearing thereby on their black faces, now turned up towards heaven, praying for mercy and forgiveness. Knees unaccustomed to prayer before, are now bended down in fervent devotion before God; and their lives well and wisely regulated by the power of that grace, which had done such wonders on their hearts. But mark what these fastidious sons of pride and self conceit had to say on this occasion. ‘ To be sure, Whitefield has done good among these low sort of people;’ a compliment for which we cannot thank them, seeing it is given with such a wretched ill grace! though a higher panegyric (on Mr. Whitefield’s labours) could not easily be found. We generally account him to be the best

physician who cures the most desperate diseases; and we should also suppose that he is the best minister, notwithstanding the *convenient* terms of methodist and enthusiast, that cures the diseases of the mind in its most desperate state; one would like to see some of these rationalists in religion (as they *humbly* wish to be thought,) trying their hands on a similar occasion. Let them seek for some other colliery of a like description, and there take one of their nicely composed paper pop-guns, and read it among the multitude! I would willingly and gladly carry the stool behind them, to see what sort of figures they would cut in their attempts to reform. I hate such silly pride, which is best corrected by the lash of ridicule and contempt."

The extracts now laid before the reader are exceedingly characteristic of Mr. Hill's usual style of preaching, and furnish a more faithful portrait of him than could easily be achieved by verbal description. He delighted to indulge himself and amuse his hearers with digressions, containing anecdote, character, pleasantry, which accounts sufficiently for the popularity of his spoken discourses; but the effect is greatly weakened, when the eye, not the ear is the channel of communication to the mind. He was not insensible of this himself; but he could be solemn and grave as well as facetious, and of this he has given proof towards the conclusion of this missionary sermon, particularly when he comes to delineate the character of a missionary. The best part of his discourse is yet to come, and for the credit of the preacher, no less than the benefit of the reader, it shall not be withheld in this memoir.

"The time allotted for this exercise will not allow me to trace minutely the successes which have attended the gospel since the apostles' days; some of those of a later date have already been presented before you. We have now to encourage ourselves from the promises and prophecies of the word of God, of the glory that is yet to be revealed. The text itself gives blessed encouragement to our expectations: 'The

gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations ; and then shall the end come.' And what may we not yet hope for, when God himself has said to his beloved son, ' Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.' In the writings of Isaiah, prophecy abounds to encourage our hopes. God will ' say to the north give up, to the south hold not back ; bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth,' ch. xliii. 6. ' For I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation to the ends of the earth. In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee. I will preserve thee and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages ; that thou mayest say to the prisoners go forth, and to them that are in darkness shew yourselves,' Isa. xlix. 6, 8, 9. And again in ch. lx. of the same prophet, how gloriously is the Gentile church called upon to ' Arise and shine, since her light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen up on her.' Even while ' darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people, the Lord should arise upon Zion ; and the Gentiles should come to her light and kings to the brightness of her rising,' that, ' her sons should come from far, and her daughters should be nursed at her side. At your leisure read the whole of the chapter, and take encouragement therefrom to set about this blessed work of God, with all your hearts, and all your souls, and all your strength.

" Convinced, therefore, from the word of prophecy, that greater things are to be done than ever yet have been done, let us encourage ourselves in our God, waiting with holy expectation till other nations ' shall cast away their idols that they have made, to the moles and to the bats, and turn unto the Lord,' Yes, my beloved, may not even we that now compose this solemn assembly, live in humble hope, that ere long we may see some devoted missionary returning, in holy

triumph, to this his native land, with some detested idol that had robbed the great Jehovah of his honour; renowned and adhered to by its once deluded votaries, now in the midst of the congregation, exhibited as the sportive triumph of all our hearts. And, further, may we not expect to behold some humble convert himself, blessing God in the midst of us for the work of this glorious day, in consequence of which his soul was brought out of darkness to behold the marvellous light of the gospel of Christ? Have we not recent instances before us that greatly encourage us to the work? I, with great gladness, mention the conduct of our Moravian brethren in this respect; their zeal, their patience, and disinterested diligence in the like work, are beyond the praise that words can reach. and our gracious Lord has astonishingly blessed their attempts. Some of our West India islands have been surprisingly evangelized by them. The inhospitable climates of Greenland and Labradore have received the glad tidings of salvation, through their instrumentality. Neither the burning regions of the south, nor yet the frozen forests of the north, could ever impede their amazing love for souls. A nobler, a more disinterested example than theirs we cannot follow. I hope we shall all feel it our privilege to keep up the most friendly correspondence with them. We will thank them heartily to tell us how they did the good, that we may go and do likewise. A better way than theirs we cannot devise, for it has answered the end. Souls have been brought to Christ thereby. They that do not speak most honourably of their mission, do themselves the greatest dishonour. But I will take the liberty to remark one odd fancy of theirs: they suppose that the soul of a poor man is equally valuable, in the sight of God, as the soul of a rich man, and they have ever proved it, by going among the most abject of mankind.

“What has also been done by our own government, by sending out some valuable missionaries to the East Indies, deserves a token of acknowledgment; and I heartily pray that the Arminian methodists, so called in their mission, may send

a *free grace gospel* throughout the world ; and the late attempt set on foot by our baptist brethren, I trust, will be crowned with large success. And though our difference about the ordinance of baptism may constrain us to act in different lines, and they cannot permit us to communicate with them, yet we are determined to be up with them ; for both they and others, if they love the Lord Jesus, in sincerity, shall be most heartily welcome whenever they please to communicate with us. Our design is all the same No matter for the name of the boat that ferries over the poor benighted sinner into the land of gospel light and liberty, provided the blessed work be but accomplished. I hate bigotry with my soul ; and while so many gospel ministers of different denominations assemble together for the same purpose, I still hope to live to see it subsist no more, to divide the Christian from the Christian ; while each of us serves God in his own line, why cannot we love as brethren ?

Let names and sects and parties fall,
And Jesus Christ be all in all.

“ I confess, in the simplicity of my heart, that some expressions have dropped from my lips, which I never designed on this solemn occasion. I am sure your patience and candour will instruct you to forgive ; but we must be serious ; serious, indeed, while we conclude with some remarks, on what ought to be the character of the missionaries themselves. And what manner of persons should these indeed be, in all holy conversation and godliness ! How full of that heavenly mindedness and spiritual mindedness, which shall raise them so far above the world, as though they had scarce an existence in it ! What a holy burning zeal for the salvation of souls ! and what wisdom from above to conduct that zeal ! what purity of knowledge to deal with those whose deep-rooted fondness for their ancient superstitions, will make them watch, with a jealous eye, over every attempt to declare among them the truth as it is in Jesus.

“ Nor, should their patience, meekness, and child-like

simplicity, be less eminent than their zeal. They must win by love, and conquer by holy perseverance. They must not be like some sort of missionaries who suppose they are to be sent a pleasant voyage at the public expence; but they must be men 'that count not their lives dear unto themselves, so that they may finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they have received of the Lord;' men that can be contented out of pure love to Christ, to 'stand in jeopardy every hour.' They must not only *live* like martyrs, but perhaps *die* like martyrs. We know not but the ancient proverb of the primitive Christians is again to be revived; 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.' They must be as dead to themselves as if they had no being; they must be completely crucified with Christ! In short, ere they embark upon the work, they must learn to *leave themselves behind them*. With holy triumph they must be taught to say, 'Farewell, my dear native land; farewell to all the ease and happiness and earthly indulgencies I have enjoyed therein; welcome affliction, necessities, distresses of every kind; labours, watchings, fastings, I now dread no more. Welcome a life now to be spent in journeying often, on perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils in the wilderness, in perils by the sea; yea, welcome weariness and painfulness, hunger and thirst, cold and nakedness; yea, welcome death itself, whenever the blessed Lord himself, who died for me, demands that costly sacrifice at my hands. These are the men that shall be made more than conquerors, over all the difficulties that human prudence, or unbelief, would present before us, to impede the way.

" Human wisdom, we well know, would soon puzzle herself in the undertaking. While her little taper is brought to find the way through the darkness of the night, she only appears to add blackness and obscurity to all things beyond the little region her rays can reach; but when the sun shines forth, he spreads his light upon the most distant objects, and every path is plain before us.

“Some may have apprehensions that little can be done, because miracles are wanting, and the gift of tongues is withdrawn! Doubtless, Peter had a notable proof at hand of the doctrine he preached, while the lame man was leaping in the temple who, but just before, had been healed by the name of the Lord Jesus. But miracles never cease, while souls are converted to God; nor will tongues be ever wanting, while the wonderful change wrought by the grace of God, so loudly bespeaks the praises of his wonder-working power. Let heathens see what grace can do on a real convert, and we need not any further be discouraged for want of miracles and tongues. And that spirit of unanimity and zeal which has hitherto attended the work, is a happy sign that good shall be done. While the torrent runs with such rapidity for the accomplishment of so good a design, I would not for the world but appear on the Lord's side, on this occasion. ‘Curse ye, Meroz, said the angel of the Lord; curse ye bitterly, the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty.’ No, my brethren; the Providence of God commands that we exert ourselves for his glory. Difficulties there doubtless are, and an abundance of prayer, prudence, and holy zeal will be necessary to conduct the work. But God can provide (and supply) all that is necessary to carry on his own work in his own way; and we have nothing to do but to follow as he condescends to lead. Thanks be to God for the unanimity and good-will that have hitherto subsisted among us; and may we still be found ‘steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as we are assured that our labours shall not be in vain in the Lord.’”

This, it must be confessed, was raising the missionary standard high, in point of personal qualifications; so high that, during the forty years the society has existed, it is to be feared, they have found but few to come up to it. But Mr. Hill acted upon an acknowledged maxim: “Let your aim and standard be high, for you will always be below your standard;

and if your standard is high, your attainments will be high also*." The few last pages of this sermon are of a redeeming quality, and sufficient to shew, if proof were needed, that the preacher could be both grave and great, if he chose; though he too often indulged his wit and pleasantry in the pulpit, acting upon the principle, "*Dulce est desipere in loco;*" yet, upon occasion, he could pierce through froth and folly, and arrest the conscience and the heart

There are one or two small tracts which Mr. Hill drew up for the use of the rising generation, which require a brief notice, in order to complete the catalogue of his publications.

One of these, entitled, "Instructions for children: or a Token of Love for the rising generation," has now reached an eighth edition. In the short preface which is dated "Surrey Chapel, May 2, 1831, Mr. Hill says, "The education of children is a most serious and important charge, and perhaps as difficult as important: for human nature is very corrupted, and sure to make its early efforts against every attempt to promote their real good. To counteract this corrupted principle, and to use every mean for the establishment of the divine nature early in the minds of youth, should be the serious aim of all such as are entrusted with this weighty concern. While it is for man to use the means, it rests only with God to give the blessing. The time of youth, however, must be considered as the most promising for success. We hear very much in the Gospels of our Lord's notice of children, and of his love to a child-like spirit. This is a good encouragement for such as are entrusted with education; but shall I be understood if I observe, that all such should be very righteous, but not righteous overmuch. Children are naturally volatile; they must be humoured in things that are innocent; as well as corrected for their faults. Their educators, therefore, need tempers firm though mild and dispassionate;

* Greene's Reminiscences of Robert Hall, p. 6.

solid understandings, and gracious, affectionate, and generous hearts.

“To oppose this volatile disposition, is to oppose nature itself; it rather needs regulation than reproof; we should, therefore, first please, that afterwards we may profit. Though a child should be allowed to be innocently gay, yet all these little gaieties may need a mild controul. Parents and guardians must first be beloved, before they can be obeyed, unless by terror, which only excites the obedience of vile servility, and which consequently creates detestation; and when from the fear of these things the mind is emancipated, the worst of consequences must ensue from such an ill-judged education. I therefore humbly request those to whom I now write, to join with me in this attempt for the good of the succeeding generation; to pray for much grace in their hearts, and much wisdom in their understandings, that they may have much success in their undertakings. It is not in the power of language to reach the evils that arise from a neglect of this duty: carelessness and indifference are the open roads to profaneness and infidelity. On the other hand, the blessings that have attended religious education are very numerous. Many a parent has been made exceedingly happy in their offspring thereby; and as the residue of the Spirit is with the Lord, the like mercies are still in store for those who seek him, by diligent prayer.”

This is followed by a Sermon on Psalm xxxiv. 11, “Come ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord:” in which he reminds them that they are the creatures of the great and all-seeing God that made heaven and earth; who is holy, just, and good, and has given us a law that forbids us to sin against him—then proceeds to the fall of our first parents, and its consequences to their posterity; the nature and enormities of sin, and how God has manifested his displeasure against it. After amusing them with a few anecdotes, he points them to the Saviour, tells them of his love to sinners, and how he manifested it by means of his

sufferings and death; speaks of his resurrection, and exaltation, and so forth. In conclusion, he entreats them to go to this blessed Jesus for the salvation of their precious souls; but never explains to them how, or by what means they are to obtain an interest in his work of redeeming grace; which is a great defect in the sermon, and must tend much to perplex and confuse the minds of thinking children! The remainder of the tract is made up of short narratives of good and bad children, with a few short prayers suited to infant minds.

Mr. Hill also compiled "A Catechism for Children; being a short and easy summary of the Christian dispensation, intended for the use of Sunday Schools." It is prefaced with an Address to the Teachers of Sunday Schools; in which he says, "I am happy to avail myself of this opportunity of expressing my thankfulness before God, for that disinterested zeal and devotedness of heart you have manifested in the education of the children of the poor of this district (Surrey Chapel). May his blessing abundantly rest upon you all, while you are extending the blessing of divine knowledge, by exertions so wisely calculated for the future good of thousands of the rising generation. It is not the design of these catechetical lectures, that they should be imposed as a tiresome task upon the memories of your little pupils; but rather that they should be considered as intended to introduce such religious instruction, in a way of familiar conversation, so that important truths of divine revelation may be rendered easy and plain to the capacities of the tender minds of those who are the objects of your care. For this purpose, I have thought it necessary to divide this little publication into several sections, so as to form a concise summary of Christian divinity, while I have endeavoured so to familiarize and apply each subject, as that the formality of a dry uninteresting system, may, as much as possible, be avoided. By this plan it will also be left optional how far each section may occasionally be committed to the memory of the children, as their kind instructors may at times direct. May the blessing of that dear Redeemer who

condescended to say, 'Suffer little children to come to me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven,' rest upon your hearts in all these labours of love!"

The Catechism is divided into nineteen Sections, and treats of God and his perfections; of man, and his fall; the depravity of human nature, and how manifested in children; the condemnation of sinners; the revelation of a Saviour; the Mission of Christ into the world; his life, sufferings, and death; Resurrection and Ascension into glory; the Gift of the Holy Spirit; his work in the conversion and salvation of sinners; the two Covenants; Baptism and the Lord's Supper; Death and Judgment. With the exception of the Section that treats of the Covenants, and of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, (which contain some crude and unscriptural statements) this compendium of Christian doctrine is entitled to considerable praise, and affords ample proof of Mr. Hill's concern for the best interests of the rising generation. This indeed was with him a favourite object, and he clung to it with his latest breath; proof of which will be adduced hereafter. In the mean time, I shall close this Section with introducing two or three of his poetical pieces which have a relation to the instruction of youth, written shortly before his death.

In the year 1832, Mr. Hill composed the following hymn, to be sung by the children of the Sunday school, after a sermon on Amos iv. 12, "*Prepare to meet thy God.*"

WHAT solemn warnings, day by day
Attack this feeble house of clay;
Soon this earthy fabric must
Sink into its native dust.

'Tis a truth which none deny,
That all who live are born to die:
Whether young, or whether old,
Life's short tale will soon be told.

Oh that all may seek to be
Fitted for eternity;
Sweetly bless'd by grace divine;
'Till in glory they shall shine.

Your old, kind, and constant friend,
 Fast approaching to his end;
 Humbly prays through Jesus' blood,
 "Be ye reconciled to God."

Children, hear an old man's cry,
 To Christ's arms of mercy fly;
 By whose sacrifice for sin,
 We alone such glories win.

Let the monster death then come,
 Waft us to our heav'nly home;
 There eternally to bless
 Christ for his all-conqu'ring grace.

There shall we forget to sin,
 Drink immortal pleasures in;
 Join with angel hosts above,
 Praising our Redeemer's love.

The two following pieces were the last productions of their author in the poetical line, and written expressly for the anniversary meetings of the Sunday-school, on the Monday and Tuesday of Easter week, 1833.

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye." Ps. xxxii. 8.

BEHOLD, dear Lord, a sinful race
 Of children, come to seek thy face;
 And early may we all begin
 To feel the grace that saves from sin.

What saucy pride and angry strife,
 Attend us in our early life;
 While our dear parents feel the smart,
 That cuts them to the very heart.

And if, throughout the merry day,
 We sport in innocence and play;
 E'en then at times we fret and rage,
 While none our anger can assauge.

Thus onward into life we move,
 Yet worse and worse we daily prove;
 And to our comrades basely show
 The wretched road that leads to woe.

And shall we still pursue the road
That leads us far from thee, our God?
Forbid it, Lord, and grant the power
That bids us go and sin no more.

Thus may we in thine image grow,
While travelling thro' this world below;
Till purified by grace divine,
Made meet for glory, we shall shine.

The Children's Prayer for their Teachers.

BLESS our teachers, dearest Lord,
They instruct us in thy word;
How we may, renew'd by grace,
Live to thee throughout our days.

May they all most richly share
Thy best blessings for their care;
Freely on us here bestowed,
Leading our lost souls to God.

Give them, Lord, with joy to see,
All our spirits yield to thee;
While the fruits of righteousness
Fill our hearts with love and peace.

Happy then we all shall be,
Here and in eternity;
Praising with the heavenly host,
Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

SECTION X.

SOME PARTICULARS OF THE LAST FEW YEARS OF MR. HILL'S
LIFE—HIS DEATH, INTERMENT, ETC. ETC.

HAVING despatched Mr. Hill's published pieces, I should now proceed to furnish the reader with some particulars of his last hours, and attempt a delineation of his character; but there is one topic in his history, as yet untouched, and of which it will be proper to take a little notice in this place, inasmuch as it tends to elucidate the character of this extra-

ordinary man, display much of the complexion of his mind, and place him in a very favourable point of view. I refer to his off-hand speeches or addresses delivered from time to time at the formation or annual return of the Bible, School, and Tract Societies, which have sprung up in such abundance during the last forty years—institutions most honourable to the age in which our lot is cast, and conferring a moral dignity on our country, of which Britons may well be proud. In originating and carrying forward these numerous associations, which may be regarded as so many rivulets of benevolence and mercy in a world of sin and misery, Mr. Hill was second to none in his day. He aided them by his counsel, his influence, his purse; and were the speeches which he delivered on those interesting occasions all collected, they would form a small volume. I cannot undertake to give the whole of them, neither would it comport with the restricted limits of this memoir to do so, were it in my power; but as a specimen I shall here subjoin a few that were delivered during the last half a dozen years of his busy life.

On Monday, May 7th, 1827, Mr. Hill attended a meeting of the friends and supporters of the British and Foreign School Society, and being called upon to second a motion, he addressed the meeting as follows:—

“He said that he had no difficulty in addressing this assembly, for, in fact, it delighted him to speak to a subject which comported so much as this did with the best feelings of his heart. An education of this kind was the only one which it became the dignity of England to promote—it was universal in the application of its blessings—it lifted barbarism and ignorance from being the victims of error and passion, and gave men the stamp of proper character. He entirely concurred in the importance of mothers having the superintendence of the child’s education; for upon the rudiments being early instilled into the tender mind before bad principles could corrupt it, depended the ultimate moral character of the mind itself. The comprehensiveness of the principle of this

society had been well said to be its greatest merit; for it embraced all classes without violating the tenderness of conscience. There were very worthy people of all sects, and why should they require a conformation of faith, while they were promoting a good that might be compromised by such a condition. Nothing but a small line of demarcation separated some religions—a little river separated the Presbyterian Church from the Church of England. ‘At this side of the Tweed,’ said the reverend gentleman, ‘I am a Church of England man, at the other side I am a Presbyterian; a little step across a stream of water makes the whole difference with me. See how liberally our gracious and benevolent sovereign acted in this respect. When his Majesty (George IV.) went to Scotland, he left the Church of England behind him, and spent his sabbath at the Presbyterian Church in Edinburgh (Loud applause.) This was wisely done; it was done like a good, sensible, Christian sovereign; for the Scotch are an honourable and useful part of the British nation; and what is there to prevent us Episcopalians from shaking hands across the Tweed with these Presbyterians; rely on it, it would be better not for one, but for both to act so. (Applause.) I do not want to squeeze any man’s conscience; I rather wish to see men respect each other’s belief, and meet in the unity of that Christian love which ought to be common to all.’ (Renewed applause.) This society, he proceeded to state, comprehended all in the great business of education founded upon the Book of God. As to the general question of education, it would be absurd, in the present day, to refute the silly, and, indeed, exploded charge of education tending to disloyalty. What disloyalty could be more dreadful than that of the barbarian acting under the uncontrolled tempest of his passions? But these rude and ungovernable impulses were restrained and corrected by the influence of education, and people would always be found to bless the government that educated and protected them. He had known the late Sir John Sylvester, who had so long filled the office of Recorder

of the City of London; he remembered having once called upon him about a poor creature that was a culprit in prison for a criminal offence, and then asking him whether he had examined if, among the crowd of juvenile delinquents that had passed under his eye, the seeds of education had in any degree been sown. The Recorder's reply was, 'I am quite persuaded that the want of education is one of the great predisposing causes which fill our criminal calendar; for when youth once obtain education, I rarely find them become adepts in crime.' (Hear.) There was the most demonstrating proof that education led to good, and prevented evil. It was that which elevated the character of the human mind, and gave it a consciousness of its own innate worth and dignity. (Hear, hear.) This was observable in the country to which he had already referred. What could be more orderly than the conduct of the people of Scotland? What tendency to rebellion had they shown since education had gone forth amongst them? The more he looked at the subject, the more satisfied he was that the reign of education was the reign of order and happiness, and that to promote it was an injunction arising out of the essence of Christianity itself."

The following speech was delivered at the Anniversary Meeting of the London Missionary Society, on Thursday, May 15th, 1828.

The Rev. ROWLAND HILL, A.M. rose amidst great applause. He spoke to the following effect:—We have several societies united in heart as one man to carry on this glorious cause. Allow me to mention the grounds of my particular regard to this society; we are neither a Church Missionary Society, nor a Wesleyan Missionary Society, nor this, that, and the other, but we are a United Missionary Society. (Cheers.) We wish to draw all good people together into one and the same cause. What has hitherto been done, is but the dewdrops before the fertilizing showers are sent down from above. The Lord has begun to accomplish his gracious promise, "The knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters

cover the sea." It is not yet accomplished, but it shall be accomplished, or the Bible is false. I scarcely know of an objection that now rests against this cause. It is hardly worth while to attempt to refute the objections of a deistical mind. "Let every man embrace that system of religion which his conscience dictated; for one religion would do as well as another." (Laughter.) Certainly one good religion would do quite as well as another. No one would ever object to that. But, pray, what religion was that which was suited to the heart? Should we find it among the heathen? Alas! some of the most abominable rites had been performed by them under the notion of religion. The odious corruption of the corrupted heart of man, will scarcely suffer human beings to live among themselves. It is nothing but divine power from above that can make man a blessing to himself, and a blessing to those who surround him. Let the mind of Christ be imparted, let the power of the second Adam be communicated to all, and then we are all brethren and sisters one of another. There can be no harm in attempting to proselytise. I admire the kindness of those proselyters who attempt to lead me, though I don't choose to be led. (Laughter.) Why, there is the honest Quaker, he thinks it would be better for me if I were to adopt his principles. One of them brought me a book one day, and said it was almost as good as the Bible itself; I read it, I thanked him for the present, I took him by the hand, and I wished to esteem him the more highly for his kindness. (Laughter.) Then there is the Roman Catholic, who tells me that his religion is the religion of the ancient Church, and that we are all apostates from it, and he is sadly afraid when we die we shall go to a place worse than purgatory. (Cheers and laughter.) Let me hear him, if I am not persuaded by him; though if he attempted to persecute me, as some belonging to that Church would advise him (though I believe there are multitudes in communion with it who would act a different part), I would treat him in a different way. If he would argue with me fairly, I, in return,

with the feelings of Christianity in my heart, would do him all the good I could. What a sad idea is that of persecution. Perhaps the Lord has permitted us to fight in different regiments for the very reason that we may be more at peace among ourselves. I don't know, I think we are pretty much at peace; and I thank God for the peace that has been amongst us, and I hope will still prevail; but while these differences exist, good may result from them, and we may still be one in Christ. Thus we endeavour to observe, that the system of proselytism should be adopted by all honest men. I want to proselytise all the sons and daughters of iniquity, and make them become children of holiness; and instead of being angry at a man that wants to make a proselyte of me, I thank him for it, and I try what I can do with him in return. (Laughter.) It would be very rude to be long, because there are many speakers to address you; but I would observe, that while we are doing good abroad, we are doing an amazing deal of good among ourselves at home. We are uniting Christians, one with another, in a very lovely manner. We are taking away from the Roman Catholics one of their strongest arguments: they say, see how all these heretics are divided. Nay, nay! See how they are united. We hear of many little differences, (and I could point out how many dissensions there have been in the Church of Rome, only it would be irrelevant) but we cannot do better than to love one another with a pure heart fervently, and thus carry on the glorious work. Another idea has occurred to my mind, and that is the present auspicious days in which we live. (Hear, hear.) The Government of our country! O! we delight in the wisdom and goodness of our Government. (Cheers.) It would be a difficult matter to tell, whether if the Church was on the right hand, and our dissenting brethren on the left, which would receive the utmost attention from the throne. The throne is evidently the protector of all. We know the liberal mind of our Sovereign, and we are highly honoured in having Lord Bexley before us, and we are not at all afraid of

having a Government spy amongst us, though I should be very glad if we had. (Immense laughter.) We have nothing to do with any politics but Gospel politics; we have only to think how we can best promote peace on earth, and diffuse universal good will among mankind. These are our motives, and we trust that good has been done, and will be done, till we see the arrival of that glorious day, when that fine prayer of our blessed Lord should be divinely fulfilled: "Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Verily it shall be done. Let it be remembered, that the dissemination of the pure principles of Christianity, is the method by which it is to be accomplished. It would be very wrong indeed to carry Christianity at the point of a bloody sword; for the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, is the power of God unto salvation in them that believe. Wherever it regenerates the heart, it corrects every vicious principle, and promotes all that is excellent and good. I would once farther say, "O God, pour down upon us, and upon this society the peculiar spirit that we need! May the directors be chosen from among the choicest of God's people. May they be men of pure holy minds, for they are the only fit persons to examine young candidates for Missionary labours. O, what piety should dwell in them and all those who are about to connect themselves with the Missionary Society." The rev. gentleman then urged the importance of a careful expenditure of the money, as the principal part of it came from the hard earnings of the working classes of the community, and concluded by observing, that many other things might be said, but he should be very rude indeed if he spoke more, especially as there were so many more gentlemen around them who were anxious to address the meeting. Having moved the resolution, he sat down amidst loud cheers.

The following speech, delivered immediately after Mr. Hill's, contains so many good things on the subject of Missions, and, coming as it did from a Tory statesman, it merits to be

recorded in this place, as a monument of the growing liberality of the age.

LORD BEXLEY rose with great pleasure to second the motion of his reverend and venerable friend who had just sat down. He desired to return his thanks for the kind manner in which he had spoken of him, for the sentiments he had uttered, and for the sentiments contained in the resolution, which so entirely coincided with his own ; it was therefore with great pleasure he supported the motion. He ought, indeed, to apologise for appearing again in a public assembly, after so recently addressing several others. But he would rather be guilty of a breach of propriety, than appear to neglect the honourable directors who requested him to attend the meeting. He rejoiced in the prosperity and success of a society to which, under Divine Providence, this country and the world at large were mainly indebted for the revival of the missionary spirit. He entertained no wish to undervalue the exertions of his Moravian brethren, or the exertions of the society for promoting Christian knowledge, which to a certain degree, had supported the cause of India ; but all who rejoiced in a Missionary spirit had cause to hail with gratitude the formation of this society. (Cheers.) To this society we were mainly indebted for dispelling incorrect notions concerning the object of Missions, and he trusted, that the Providence of God, which called it into action, and induced its supporters to endeavour to promote the cause of God, by the ordinary means in which Providence works in secular affairs, would bless it to a still greater degree. Already it was extended to the right hand and to the left, to the north and to the south, to the east and to the west. The society which he had now the honour to address, was supported by many similar institutions in this country. They were all supporting the same cause, and enlisting under the same banners. We perceived a corresponding spirit extending itself beyond the Atlantic. The United States of America had taken up the cause with a degree of spirit and energy, which required a double exertion on the part of Britain, or she would soon be left behind. (Cheers.) We perceived the continent of Europe indicating a disposition to support the same cause, and a concurrence in all who named the name of Christ, to carry the blessing of the Gospel to those who had not yet bowed the knee before the Redeemer's footstool. He must allude to the particular pleasure he felt at that part of the Report, in which mention was made of the success of the society's operations in the southern part of India. He had heard from very respectable authority, he had heard in Parliament, on the testimony of very respectable men, that any attempt to convert the nations of India was hopeless. But let them read what Bishop Heber had said on the subject, and then say whether they should not attempt, by all legitimate means, to carry to them the blessings of Christianity? God forbid that they should not attempt, by every proper and consistent mode, to introduce the blessings of salvation among them. He was not aware whether the Report made any particular allusion to the Missions in the South Sea Islands, but he must say, that the success of this society in the South Seas was among the most wonderful, providential interferences which had taken place subsequent

to the days of the apostles. (Cheers.) He hardly thought that since the period to which he alluded, there had been a similar instance of the diffusion of divine light over a whole nation. When we saw whole nations renouncing idolatry, and allowing their idols either to be thrown into the sea or sent over to this country, we must of necessity recognise the hand of Divine Providence. He was inclined to hope the period was near at hand, when the great work, so signally begun, would be carried to the remotest regions of the earth. Then to the name of Jesus every knee would bow, and every tongue confess that he was God, to the glory of God the Father. (Loud cheers.)

The following address was delivered at an anniversary meeting of the friends and promoters of the Surrey Auxiliary Hibernian Society, Dec. 4th, 1828.

The CHAIRMAN observed, that this Auxiliary was formed to assist a society which had effected inexpressible and incomparable good, the extent of which could only be known by omniscience. He was one of the first promoters of the Parent Institution. After various methods had been suggested for carrying its objects into effect, it was determined that some of the friends should visit Ireland, and inquire into its state; the result of which was, that a chapel was taken in Cork, and a minister placed in it, as were also others in different parts of the country. At the end of three years, however, no visible effect had resulted from their labours, but the Most High knowing his own designs, put it into the minds of some of the intelligent Irish to raise schools. The plan was suggested to the committee, who immediately signified their approval. At the end of the first year the schools contained 400 children, and at the end of ten years, 46,000. Many circumstances had transpired during that period to prove that God was smiling upon their labours. The period at which we lived should excite the liveliest emotions of gratitude in the breast of every Christian, for it was evident that the end of time was at hand; but previous to its arrival, "the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters covered the sea," and all the societies which were now formed were unquestionably engaged in diffusing that knowledge. (Applause.)

The Secretary having read the Report,

The Rev. T. WEBSTER, in moving the first resolution, stated, at considerable length, the operations of the Parent Society in Ireland. By means of the Institution, 300,000 persons had been taught to read the Scriptures. Through the liberality of the British and Foreign Bible Society, 200,000 copies of the Scriptures had been circulated. Fifty or sixty persons were now employed in reading the Scriptures; wherever a few persons were assembled together, the readers made known to them the tidings of salvation, that they might thereby be comforted amidst their afflictions, soothed amidst their woes, and be prepared to meet the last enemy with composure. The operations of the society were likely to extend all over Ireland. Since the last annual report had been made up, 70 new schools had been opened, and applications continued to be made for a still greater increase, but the society being £500 in debt, it was impossible to comply with the request.

The Rev. R. HILL said, this society went to work in a very legitimate manner; it merely laid before the people that sacred volume which was the guide to eternal joy. England and Ireland were once called sister kingdoms, they were now still more united, but not so closely as they would be when both countries entertained the same view respecting that invaluable book, the Bible. It was not his wish to say anything to gall the minds of Roman Catholics, but he thought it was very true that the priests did not allow the common people to read the word of God. He thanked God that we lived in a period of liberty, that we might read what we liked, that the law only punished those who printed what ought not to be read. When the reformers first entered upon their work at the Reformation (for so he conceived it to be, though he had no wish to speak against his Roman Catholic brethren) what was the design that they had in view? To teach the people to read the Scriptures; to translate the Bible into the vernacular tongue; and then, most wisely, to place a large Bible, to be kept perpetually open in the Church, that whenever the people had leisure they might repair there, and either read it or hear

it read to them. By these means popery was read out of the kingdom, the people renounced a religion of ignorance, sought the pure Word of God, and thirsted for the divine truths it contained. Unhappily, the Irish people were now in the same predicament that England was previous to the Reformation; they were unable to read, and the consequence was, ignorance still abounded. He trusted, however, that the time would soon arrive when that ignorance would be dispelled by teaching the youth to read the Word of God. This plan had already been adopted to a blessed extent; let it be followed up, and by and bye there would be a universal change in that country. Only let the Bible be read, and much good must inevitably result from it. Education was now almost universal, and it was the parents' own fault if their children were not taught to read. He rejoiced that there were not only institutions for instructing the ignorant, but that the Bible Society, as soon as the people were taught to read, were ready to put the Holy Scriptures into their hands. If the people, therefore, remained ignorant now, it must be from their own choice, and would awfully prove that they "loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." There was no forcing people to be religious; it was most absurd to think of making a man religious by means of a cudgel. (Applause.) It must be done by persuasion; it was, therefore, the duty of ministers to instruct all around them, out of the pure sources of knowledge which were before them. Nothing was so important as the instruction of the mind; every person must be aware of the impossibility of doing an action unless there was a mind to prompt the performance of it. In all actions there must be something mentally within, before there would be any external manifestation of it. The grand way of inducing a person to act with propriety, was to make them think well; and to accomplish this object, the sacred volume should be placed in their hands. He so much approved of education, that he conceived it the highest honour to use all and every opportunity of driving ignorance out of it. Only look at those

countries where people were left to follow the sad corruptions of human nature; where they possessed no other guide but their own internal passions; where the lust of the eye, the pride of the flesh, and a thousand other evils were perpetually working the commission of evil; and contrast it with those countries where there was an extensive circulation of the Word of God, which was able through faith to make men wise unto salvation; and observe the wonderful difference which they presented to the mind. He would therefore advise the meeting to do all they possibly could to promote education, but at the same time, if it was not religious education, he questioned whether it would not do quite as much harm as good? Alas! alas! what melancholy scenes were presented in some of the public schools. How many instances had there been, where youths as they grew up in years, grew up in wickedness also! It was, therefore, of the highest importance in educating youth, to impress upon their minds a knowledge of God, and point them to the sinner's only hope, as revealed in the Bible. Christians in this country ought to thank God that the Bible was placed before them in their native tongue, and was as correctly translated as if it were the genuine word of God itself. Oh, it was melancholy to think how the Douay copy of the Scriptures had been perverted by the Catholics; that beautiful passage, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," had been rendered by them, "Do penance, for the kingdom, &c." Those who thus translated it must know that they were doing wrong, and that they were giving a turn to a passage which plainly taught that sin ought to be hated, and that it was the duty of every man to flee from its commission. He begged to second the resolution. (Applause.)

On Tuesday, May 5th, 1829, Mr. Hill attended the Anniversary Meeting of the Religious Tract Society, on which occasion he thus delivered his sentiments:—

"He said, that if, at that time of the meeting he were to make a long speech it would certainly be a moving speech, because he supposed the meeting thought it was high time to

move out of the room. He could not impart that information to the assembly that some other speakers were able to do, but it became him to say something by way of supporting the Society. What was it that had given such a peculiar zeal or power, or influence, to the Society? Why, the candour and catholicity that characterised it; and the union which it attempted to promote among the good people of all denominations. The word Catholic was frequently made use of. He meant no offence to those who called themselves, or were called Roman Catholics, when he stated his desire to give to this Society a new appellation, and to call it 'The Christian Catholic Society.' It was not very Catholic in Roman Catholic friends to deny that Protestants were Christians as well as themselves, while Protestants believed that some of that denomination were truly pious, and frequently quoted the names of Fenelon and Thomas-a-Kempis as being all that Protestants could wish to see men. But Protestants deserved the name of Catholics. They were all of one heart and one mind. The Catholics charged the Protestants with being a disunited people. That was a mistake. It was true there were little variations among different denominations of Christians, but they were all united in heart, in love, and in affection, to the grand truths of the Gospel; and, by the blessing of God, they would so continue until they had pulled down infidelity, and all its abominations. Now he did not know whether he might be saying too much; if he did he hoped he should be forgiven. A sermon was preached in his chapel by that famous minister of Jesus Christ, the Rev. Dr. Chalmers. Oh! he (Mr. H.) often thought, during its delivery, that he should have liked to go up to the pulpit and give him a warm pat on the back for the excellency of his sermon. (Laughter.) And he (Mr. H.) thought what a pity it was that that man could not sound the same glorious gospel trumpet in Saint Paul's. He verily thought it would neither make thunder nor storm in the world; and he sincerely hoped 'at the time would come when there would be more of that

good feeling among all good people than ever. There had lately been a great commotion about the Catholics, and there had been some ill blood upon the subject; but he hoped that it would subside for ever. The Roman Catholics, would find that Protestants had dropped their enmity against them, let the Catholic drop his enmity against the Protestant, and let each party draw nearer to one another, making the Bible the centre of their union. He was sure it was impossible to correct a man's errors by persecution; a man's errors could never be beat out of his head by a cudgel. The faith of Christ should always be contended for in a Christian spirit, and Christians should attempt to win over those that they conceived were in error, by showing what a mild spirit the religion of the Bible inspired in the heart. The good that had already been accomplished in the world extended to this Society; and he (Mr. H.) thought he beheld the dawning of that day when the 'knowledge of the Lord should cover the earth as the waters covered the sea.' The Rev. Gentleman then requested the Secretary to read the resolution, and, after making a few remarks upon the holy tendency of the gospel, concluded by naming a resolution congratulating them upon the introduction of the gospel into China, and recommending increased exertions on behalf of the Society."

On the 11th of the same month, May, 1829, Mr. Hill again attended the Anniversary Meeting of the British and Foreign School Society, and spoke at greater length on the merits of the Institution, than he had done two years before. But in perusing this second speech, the reader will find in it a proof of the justness of a common observation, that, through a failure of the powers of memory and recollection, old people are apt to relate the same story or anecdote over and over again. The interview with Sir John Silvester, the Recorder of London, is to be found in the Speech which Mr. Hill delivered before the friends of the same Society, in 1827. See pages 247-248 *ante*.

"The Rev. Rowland Hill addressed the Meeting. He said it might appear strange for him to ask at that late period, how

they came there that day? They would naturally answer, that their legs had brought them; but what put the legs in motion? The mind had something to do in the matter. So it was that the mind constituted the whole man; for just as the mind decorated the character, so did an individual deserve the name of a man. The first great object was to let people know that they had minds, for many were ignorant of that fact (a laugh); and the next was to improve the mind, with the existence of which they had become acquainted. Evil-minded men always acted badly; and good-minded men were found to act with wisdom, because their minds directed them into the paths of virtue and knowledge. In that alone was the utility of education. A man sunk into barbarism was only one remove above the brutes, unless his mind was raised above a state of ignorance, which could only be done by illuminating the understanding, and, if he might be permitted to speak in his own way, that could only be effected by the grace of God. He thanked God for good governors; but even these were not wanted, provided the mind itself was well governed. A man who possessed a virtuous mind did not require any person to govern him. But it was impossible to know what the mind was until it was brought forward. A good mind might be found in a peasant, and a bad one in an individual who belonged to the highest rank of nobility. Therefore it was that he expressed the highest approbation of a society, the object of which was to educate the people, and to make men wiser, and more virtuous. It had been well observed, that mere education did nothing; and hence, unless education was founded on proper principles, little benefit could arise from it. In a conversation he once had with the late Sir John Sylvester, he asked him if the principal offenders, who degraded our courts of justice, had received any education? Sir John said that, among the number of those who came before him, he had never met with one who had been piously educated, or taught to read his Bible, and to worship his Maker. (Applause) He (Mr. Hill,) wished to see every person educated, whatever

his situation in life might be. He would even wish to be served by a man of intelligence (a laugh); for if his eyes should fail him, the servant might read to him, and amuse his leisure hours. Servants would also come to know that he loved their intelligence; and they would love him for doing so; and thus they would love one another. (Applause.) He did not know that fine minds were to be found in cottages; but he did know that those who had fine minds would have them illuminated under the benign and kindly influence of this society. He had frequently admired the prayer inserted in the fly-leaf of the Bible put forth by the Society for promoting Christian knowledge: 'Blessed Lord, who hath caused all Holy Scripture to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them.' Thus we are first to mark them; next to learn; and then inwardly to digest them (which is the best word of all); and if we use our minds in learning and inwardly digesting them, we should be able to read and understand the Bible—that book which it is of the utmost importance that every human being should be made acquainted with. The improvement of the mind was of the first importance; it softened the manners, subdued the passions, and made men feel like immortal beings. What availed fine looks, or sounding titles, if the mind were wanting? Deprived of it, a man was not much better than a Newfoundland dog (laughter); and in fact, not so good, because he was not so easily governed. He had now arrived at a ripe old age; and his eyes had begun to fail him; so that they did not let much light into his mind. But his tongue and his ears still served him, through which knowledge could still be conveyed to his understanding; and as long as they retained their powers, they would be devoted to the service of his heavenly Father. He entreated all who heard him to pour knowledge into the minds of children. He blessed God that the system of education had been changed; and that they might now expect to see better fruits springing up from the new soil on which the tender shoots were reared. He allowed

that the question might be put to him, 'had there not been much soreness and ill blood on the subject of Catholic emancipation?' That such had been the case, he freely admitted, and the more was the pity. Some looked at popery on the black side, calling to mind when fire and faggots were burning in Smithfield; but the times were gone by for spreading religion by faggot or cudgel; for surely people could not keep in the right path by incarcerating and excommunicating one another, or by imposing heavy penances upon transgressors. 'Give us, then, (continued Mr. Hill,) all good minds; let us now have no weapons but those of kindness and love. I am glad that I took no part in the Catholic question; I thought it my duty to stand aloof from it altogether; and to leave it in the hands of those who knew better how to deal with it than I could pretend to do. I trust all men will now range themselves on the side of truth, and refuse to listen to error; for I am well convinced that, whatever delusions may prevail among the people, they will soon be dissipated in these great and enlightened days.' (Applause.) Mr. Hill then moved the Resolution of thanks to His Royal Highness, the Duke of Sussex, for his long-continued patronage of the Society.

We cannot wonder that the British and Foreign Bible Society, should obtain the countenance of Mr. Hill, and be at all times the object of his veneration and devout regard. From its very origin he was one of its ablest patrons; a Member of its Committees; and he laboured by every possible means to promote its interest. He had often before taken part in its Anniversary Meetings; but the following short address, delivered by him, on Wednesday May 5th, 1830, may suffice to show how he stood affected towards it. The prelates referred to were the bishops of Chester and Winchester.

"The Rev. Rowland Hill rose to move the next resolution, and was received with loud cheers. He had to move the thanks of the Meeting to the Right Rev., the Rev., and others, the Vice-presidents of the Society, for their support during the

past year. He said he felt much embarrassed at being called upon to bear his testimony to the services which had been performed by those highly respectable individuals who were included in the present vote ; for his feelings were so strong in every thing which related to this solemn Institution, that he could scarcely give them expression. What could be more solemn than spreading the Book of God all over the world ? He congratulated the meeting on the presence of the two Right Rev. Prelates who presided over so large a portion of the religious community of this country—of that Protestant church, whose liturgy he might call a beautiful Bible liturgy, for it was filled with extracts from that Divine Book. Those prelates had done them the favour—should he say so?—of being present, no—rather, he would say, they had done themselves the favour, for he would venture to assert, that since they had been called to preside in the church, no act of theirs could be more becoming the mitre they wore, than that of assisting at a Meeting which had for its object the circulation of the Bible. (Applause.) He had once heard of a clergyman who had apologised for having attended at a Bible Meeting. Apologise for attending at a Bible Meeting ! Why, he ought then to apologise for reading his Liturgy, for that was full of the Bible ; he ought to apologise for reading the Psalms, which were read at least four times in a month ; he ought to apologise for reading the Lessons, and then for reading the Epistles, and then for reading the Gospels ; in fact, if he discharged his duty as a clergyman, he would have had a great number of apologies to make, for a great part of his duty consisted in reading the Bible. (Applause.) The Right Rev. Prelates to whom he alluded, would have to make no apology for attending here to-day. It was a delightful part of their duty, as it was an important and useful part. When he looked at those Right Rev. Prelates, he could not but feel increased regret at the illness of their beloved Sovereign, who had appointed such Bishops. (Cheers.) Long might he live to appoint many such (increased applause) ; and long might those Right Rev

Prelates live, to lay their hands on the heads of others, equally distinguished by their attachment to their Bible and their God. The rev. gentleman then proceeded to comment in very forcible language upon that brotherly union among Christians, which had been brought about by the dissemination of the Bible, and added, that he was not able to dwell upon the subject in the manner which it required; he [was an old man, now nearly eighty-six, and on this occasion, probably the last on which he should ever have to address them, he would beg to impress upon those who heard him, the honour, and the happiness of promoting the circulation of the Bible. To the hour of his death, he should rejoice at having been made, in any way, instrumental in promoting that great cause. (Applause.) He concluded by repeating, and commenting upon a prayer which was most appropriately placed in the fly-leaf of a book circulated by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge:—‘Blessed Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning.’” &c.

The following speech was delivered to the friends of the London Missionary Society, at their Anniversary Meeting, May 13th, 1830, and the reader will again recognize the traces of a failing memory in the mention of Dr. Chalmers and his preaching in St. Paul’s cathedral, previously given at the Meeting of the Tract Society.

“The Rev. R. Hill.—Thanks to our respected Chairman for the wise and proper hint he has given about short speeches. Mine shall be a very short one, and it shall not be a quarrelsome one. (Laughter.) My dear and much beloved brother, Mr. Hatchard, has given his highest approbation to the attempts made by this Institution to send the Gospel all the world over; but he will allow me to correct one mistake into which he fell. I never will consent to the idea of the London Missionary Society being directly or positively a Dissenting Missionary Society. I was always led to conclude that it was simply a Missionary Society. If we could get a hundred men to go forth, we should be happy to send them; but we leave

them to adopt what mode of worship they like best, and whatever species of church discipline they please. All we require of them is, that they be well-grounded in the truths of the Gospel, feel its power upon their own hearts, and propagate its principles among the heathen to whom they are sent. We live in auspicious days, but I hope we shall by and bye see (what I have on former occasions expressed a hope of witnessing) those high walls which are partially thrown down, still more abundantly levelled, and all the partitions so entirely removed, as that we may shake hands with each other all the world over. (Laughter, and applause.) I really do not think that if that great and excellent man, Dr. Chalmers, who is now in town on public business, were to be invited to preach in St. Paul's Cathedral, that it would create a thunder-storm or an earthquake. (Laughter.) I pray that the time may speedily come when, without compromising our particular sentiments, we shall exhibit that Christian spirit which is now so rapidly extending itself in some parts of Germany, where Lutherans and Calvinists can give to each other the right hand of fellowship. The dress of a person is not the person himself; and what signifies the outward form of religion, provided there is its inward power acting on the heart? I remember once being engaged in conversation with a man, and I enquired of him whether there were any good people in the town in which he lived; to which he replied in his way, (and, O! it was a narrow spirit,) 'We were all Dissenters born.' I said to him, 'Do not tell me about Dissenters born, but Dissenters born again.' (Laughter.) These are the people we want; we want to see true Christians united together as one man, and then we shall have 'a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether.' (Cheers.) These are sentiments that I have always upheld, and I will say one thing farther, though my speech shall and will be very short; that if ever this London Missionary Society becomes a mere Sectarian Society of any denomination, Surrey Chapel doors shall be shut against it. (Cheers.) Never will I have any thing to do with any society that does not breathe

universal good-will to all mankind. Our business is to remember that God hath made of one flesh all men that dwell upon the face of the earth, and we never can be too loving and affectionate among each other. There are essential truths by which we must abide; but if you saw a good Churchman and a good Dissenter upon their knees, you would not be able to find out which was which. If you would close your eyes against something that you saw in the place, and not close your ears against the prayers that were offered up, you would not be able to tell whether it was a Churchman or a Dissenter that was engaged in that solemn duty. I hope that if you visited the house of good people, to whatever denomination they might belong, that you would find them living under those sacred principles that would enable them to 'deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world.' But I am determined that my speech shall be a short one, and so good bye to you all. Mr. Hill then retired from the platform amid long-continued applause."

In the year 1831, though he had now nearly attained an entrance upon his eighty-eighth year, Mr. Hill was able to attend the Anniversary Meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which took place at Exeter Hall, on Wednesday, May 4th, on which occasion, the proceedings, in some respects, were the source of great distress to him. The report having been read by Mr. Brandram, one of their secretaries, Dr. Dealtry rose to move, as usual, that it be received and printed, which was seconded by Dr. Bennet. Lieut. Gordon next commenced an address, the object of which was to introduce alterations that were calculated to subvert the fundamental principles of the Society. The drift of his observations was to show that the Bible Society was a Christian Institution; but that Arians and Socinians were not Christians, and consequently ought to have nothing to do with the management of the Society, from which they should be excluded. His propositions, however, were so far from being approved by the

assembly at large, that innumerable voices were lifted up against him, and the utmost confusion prevailed. The gallant officer was repeatedly called to order, but nothing could prevent him from persevering, and he was ultimately compelled to desist by the clamour which his indiscretion had raised; though not till he had succeeded in proposing an amendment. The Rev. Lundy Foot then rose, and proposed another amendment, suggesting that Socinians might be members of the Society, but should be excluded from Committees, and all official and honorary posts. After a prolonged discussion, amid a tumult vociferous beyond description, the two amendments were put to the vote, and negatived by an overwhelming majority. It was amidst this tempestuous and stormy debate that Mr. Hill rose to rebuke the fomenters of discord, which he did with powerful effect, his age and venerable looks adding dignity to all he uttered.

Addressing himself to the President, he said, that “for his own part he could wish that all the Roman Catholics and all the Socinians in the country belonged to the Bible Society; because he was sure they would find enough in that sacred volume to convince them of the erroneous sentiments which they respectively held. He did not care for his own part, *who* it was that presented *him* with a Bible: the only question with him was, *What kind of a Bible* it was that they gave. He believed that the number of those who held Socinian sentiments was but insignificant; and he was very sure, that from that Book they might learn that Christ was ‘the Image of the invisible God, the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person,’ and that all the angels of God were commanded to worship him. The more Bibles were given to such persons, the fewer there would be of them. With these ideas he would advise them to break up the meeting, and all of them go home, as he should presently do, and there let them remain until they could learn to be peaceable, and deliver their sentiments quietly—he was going to say, like gentlemen; and as, in their present temper they

could not do so, he himself should take French leave and retire!"

These few remarks came from his lips with almost the force of prophetic authority; the strong, good sense couched in them, made its way to the hearts of his auditory; the furious zealots felt the keen, yet mild reproof, and stood abashed at their own folly and indiscretion. A momentary schism, however, took place in the Society, and an attempt was actually made to set on foot what was called a strictly "Trinitarian Bible Society;" but it proved abortive. Among the seceders for the moment, were the Hon. and Rev. Gerard Noel and his brother, Baptist Noel; but on the return of the Anniversary, May, 1832, they both resumed their connection with the parent Society, acknowledging their error, and nobly apologizing for it. Harmony was now restored, and the meeting fully compensated for the discord that had formerly distressed its friends.

Mr. Hill attended the meeting of the Book Society for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor, the 81st Anniversary of which was held in Exeter Hall, on Friday, May 6th, 1831, two days after the tumultuous doings above referred to, and presided on the occasion; but it seems to have been the last public meeting of the kind which he was able to attend. Immediately after, he took an affecting leave of his congregation at Surrey Chapel, from whom he parted under the strong impression that, as he was going into Gloucestershire, he should see them upon earth no more—and "more deep and unaffected sorrow," says one, "could not be evinced." His divine Master, however, spared him, and permitted him to return to town, at the end of the year, with a somewhat renovated constitution; but though he was able to preach generally once a Sabbath, during the winter of 1831-2, he does not appear to have been strong enough to attend any of the Anniversary meetings in May 1832. An expectation generally prevailed, that he would again take the chair at the Annual Meeting of the Book Society which was held at Exeter

Hall, May 8th, and much interest was excited thereby; but age, indisposition, and bodily infirmities, prevented his attendance, to the no small regret and disappointment of many present, who had frequently been cheered with the sallies of his wit, instructed by his wisdom, and animated by his piety. At the conclusion of the meeting, a vote of gratitude to Mr. Hill was proposed and carried, for the services he had rendered the Society during the sixty years he had been a member of it.

Much of Mr. Hill's personal history, during the last twelve or fifteen months of his life, may be gathered from a perusal of the Sermons, &c. which accompany this Memoir; but it is an affecting history. It cannot be said of him as is recorded of the Hebrew lawgiver, that "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated." His state more resembled that which is pourtrayed by the Preacher, in Eccles. xii. He arrived at the day "when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low: also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond-tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets."

"Of all the periods and events of life," says a sensible modern writer, "the concluding scene is the one of deepest interest to the person himself, and to surviving spectators. Various are the ways in which it comes, and various the aspects it presents; but in all it is solemn. What, indeed, can be more so, than the approach of that moment, which, to the dying man, is the boundary betwixt time and eternity! which concludes the one, and commences the other; which terminates all his interests in this world, and fixes his condition for a never-ending existence in the world unknown! What

can be more so, than those moments of silent and indescribable anxiety when the last sands of the numbered hour are running: when the beat of the heart has become too languid to be felt at the extremities of the frame; when the cold hand returns not the gentle pressure; when the restless limbs lie still and motionless; when the eye is fixed, and the ear turns no more towards the voice of consoling kindness; when the breath, before oppressive and laborious, becomes feebler and feebler, till it dies slowly away—and to the listening ear there is no sound amidst the breathless silence; nor to the arrested eye, that watches with the unmoving look of thrilling solicitude for the last symptom of remaining life, is motion longer susceptible; when surrounding friends continue to speak in whispers, and to step through the chamber on the tip-toe of cautious quietness, as if still fearful of disturbing him whom the noise of a thousand thunders could not now startle, who has fallen on that last sleep, from which nothing shall rouse him, but ‘the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God.’ ”

When Mr. Hill began to find his physical strength would no longer enable him to discharge the stated functions of his office at Surrey Chapel, he engaged the Rev. George Weight, as an assistant minister, and to that gentleman we are indebted for the following account of Mr. Hill’s sickness and death.

During the whole of the winter of 1832, Mr. Hill had been accustomed to take the service at Surrey Chapel, on Sunday morning, and also to meet the communicants on Monday evening. He generally preached forty minutes; and his quotations from the Scripture were almost always remarkably correct and appropriate. As his eye-sight had nearly failed, his texts were written for him, in a large hand, on a sheet of fools-cap paper; and even then, he sometimes required assistance in the pulpit in reading them. He frequently complained of the failure of his memory; but it was not when preaching that this defect was apparent.

He delivered his last Sermon, on Lord’s-day, March 31st, 1833, from 1 Cor. ii. 7, “We speak the wisdom of God in a

mystery, &c.” a correct report of which will be found in the subsequent pages—the delivery occupied about fifty minutes. As he took peculiar interest in Sabbath schools, he had engaged to address the teachers of the Southwark Sunday School Union, on the following Tuesday evening; but his increasing weakness prevented him from speaking that night for more than ten minutes. There was a fervency in his address which was uncommon, even to him. This little effort greatly exhausted him, and he never entered the chapel afterwards.

On the morning of Good Friday (April 5th) he complained of unusual lassitude, but would not consent to Mr. Weight assisting him in the morning service, in which he wished to engage. About ten o'clock, however, his weakness had so much increased, that he felt it necessary to decline going into the chapel. He intended to have discoursed from Heb. x. 4, “By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”

He requested Mr. W. to apologise for him to the congregation, saying, “I cannot now do the things that I would: I hope I am not a lazy minister, though I am compelled to be an inactive one.” On the evening of that day, he exhibited a temporary aberration of mind, but it was of short continuance.

During the following day (Saturday) he again indulged the wish of preaching on Easter Sunday; and if he had been able to do so, his subject would have been the resurrection of Christ, from 1 Pet. i. 3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” It was the usual custom for the children of various Sabbath schools to assemble at Surrey Chapel on the Monday and Tuesday of Easter week, and these days were always anticipated by Mr. Hill with peculiar pleasure. On the present occasion he was totally unable to exert himself as he was wont to do, and was obliged to content himself with sitting at the window of his drawing-room, and

beholding the children as they thronged the chapel yard. He spoke, however, with much delight of past days when he had met them and preached to them the Lord Jesus Christ.

On Monday evening he dictated to Mr. Weight a number of aphorisms, of which the following may serve as a sample. "We can never desire to say 'Thy will be done!' until the kingdom of God is set up in our hearts; and we can have no evidence that the kingdom of God is within us, unless it produce righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." "Every subject of Christ's kingdom will naturally be desirous of entire conformity to the holy laws of that government to which he belongs. These first principles must be rooted and grounded in the heart of every gospel minister, or he cannot expect to preach them with power and success." "He who is influenced by these truths will yearn over souls in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and be animated with a glowing anxiety that his hearers should feel the truths he feels himself." "No considerations whatsoever, which are not immediately conducive to the introduction of these first principles, should ever be allowed to influence his mind, or attend him in his sacred work. He will not consider his own feelings, but lay himself out for the universal good of the Saviour's cause. He will spend and be spent for the Redeemer, and die harnessed as a good soldier of the Cross." "While it is acknowledged, that the labourer is worthy of his hire, yet this will be the very last thing that will engage his devoted mind. He will 'make full proof of his ministry,' and instead of asking when, where, and how often he is to preach, he will inquire how he can bring most souls to Christ, and do most good in his heavenly work." "It is impossible to excite zeal in the minds of the people, if they do not witness the overflowings of that zeal in the heart of their ministers. He must provoke them unto love and to good works."

Now, though there be nothing objectionable in any of these sentences, it would be difficult to discover in them any traces of the prophetic *afflatus*; they partake much of common-

place, and are only deserving of record as showing the complexion of his mind three days before his departure. On Wednesday, the day before his death, he conversed freely with Mr. Weight on the subject of his past experience, and recommended it to him to make full proof of his ministry, and give himself wholly to it. In the course of the day, Mr. Weight asked his permission to write to a few of the neighbouring ministers, to invite them to meet for special prayer on his account, to which he instantly consented. The letters were accordingly prepared, but perceiving that "all the springs of life were ebbing fast in death," the letters were not sent. The proposal, however, appeared to gratify him so much, that he desired his servant to write down a hymn which he wished to compose for their use on the evening of the meeting; but he was not able to collect his mind for any such purpose. Mr. W. asked him if he could see his personal interest in Christ? To which he replied, that he could see more of the personal glory of Christ, than of his own interest in him. "God," said he, "is letting me down gently into the grave. I feel myself a poor, weak, sinful mortal, and desire to creep into heaven through some crevice in the door."

On the evening of the same day (Wednesday) during a temporary wandering of mind, he requested that a chapter might be read to him, as he wished to select a text. The passage he chose was, 2 Cor. v. 4, "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." About ten that night, he sent for Mr. Weight to conduct family worship at his bed-side, and refused to go to rest until all his domestics had assembled around him, in compliance with his request.

On Thursday morning, April 11th, his articulation failed, but those about him thought they could hear him repeating passages of scripture, and verses of hymns—particularly, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for those

that love him." About ten o'clock that same morning, Mr. Weight gently whispered to him, the lines in Mr. Gambold's poem, which were almost hourly on his lips :—

" And when I'm to die,
Receive me I'll cry,
For Jesus hath lov'd me, I cannot say why—
But this I can find,
We two are so join'd,
He'll not be in glory, and leave me behind."

Mr. Hill tried to utter them, but could not, and this was almost the last evidence he gave of remaining sensibleness. He gradually became weaker, and departed this life about half-past five in the afternoon of that day, without a groan, a struggle, or a sigh; but exhibiting a fine illustration of "falling asleep in Jesus."

Mr. Hill's funeral obsequies took place, according to his own expressed wish, at Surrey Chapel; on the morning of Friday, April the 19th, when his mortal remains were interred in a brick vault prepared for them, immediately beneath the pulpit. The congregation began to assemble as early as nine o'clock, and to prevent confusion, persons were admitted by ticket. At ten o'clock every seat was filled, with the exception of those that had been reserved for the mourners and friends. The pulpit and galleries were hung with black drapery, and nearly the whole assembly appeared in deep mourning. Most of the shops in the immediate neighbourhood were partially closed, and many of the private houses had their window-blinds closely drawn, as a testimony to Mr. Hill's memory. The "pomp and circumstance" attending the ceremony of interment have already been sufficiently dilated on in all the periodicals, daily, weekly, and monthly, and may well be passed over in this place. A funeral sermon was delivered by Mr. Jay, of Bath, founded on Zech. xi. 2, "*Howl, fir tree; for the cedar is fallen!*" But the application of the imagery is not very apparent; neither was the oration, taken as a whole, in Mr. Jay's best style.

Funeral sermons were preached, in honour of his memory, by most of the dissenting ministers about town, and in various parts of the country, and several of them have been issued through the medium of the press. The Directors of the London Missionary Society held a meeting on Monday, April the 22d, when it was resolved—"That the Directors receive with sentiments of profound submission to the Divine will the intelligence of the decease of the venerable Rowland Hill, and are deeply sensible of the loss which the Society has been thus called to sustain. That, while the Directors affectionately sympathise with the bereaved congregation, and a large portion of the Christian community, in mourning the departure of the brightest ornament of the age in which he lived, for more than threescore years one of the greatest blessings to the church—they rejoice that Mr. Hill was one of the founders of the Society, and one of the preachers who, at its first formation, publicly advocated its claims—that from its commencement the Society has received his entire approbation, his ardent attachment, his ready and effective service, and his liberal support; and the last public service for which he allowed himself to be announced, was to preside at a meeting of its friends: and while the Directors feel grateful that, to the end of his life, the Rev. Rowland Hill was the firm and constant friend of the Society, and rejoice in the faith which supported, and the hope which cheered his last hours on earth, they would pray that the mantle of the departed may descend on his survivors, and that the Lord may raise up others, who shall emulate his labours, and ultimately participate in his blessedness."

As the "Village Itinerancy, or Evangelical Association for the spread of the Gospel," had always partaken largely of Mr. Hill's affection and aid: so he now testified his goodwill towards it, by bequeathing the bulk of his property to the Treasurer for the time being, to be appropriated to its support.

At a meeting of the Committee for managing the affairs of that Society, held on Wednesday, April 17th, the following

grateful testimonial was drawn up and entered upon the Journal of their proceedings:

“ The Committee having heard with sacred sorrow of the death of their late colleague, the Rev. Rowland Hill, M. A., the venerable minister of Surrey Chapel, resolve, before they proceed to the business of the day, to place on their minutes a small, but faithful, portrait of their late venerable friend; from a knowledge extending through a period of more than thirty years, and from a pre-eminent regard for his excellent character.

“ Descended from an ancient family of rank, and born in an age when evangelical piety did not frequently walk in ‘the high places of the earth,’ Mr. Hill, with some other branches of his family, became in early life a decided Christian, and a devoted servant of the Son of God. Educated at Eton, and afterwards at St. John’s, Cambridge, he was intended for the Church of England, and received deacon’s orders; and, when he might have entered into full service of the Church of England, he voluntarily took his rank with a few other pious and evangelical clergymen, and more especially with the immortal Whitefield, by going out of the regular path-ways of ecclesiastical service into the wilderness of society, to seek ‘the lost sheep:’ nobly sacrificing ease, and fame, and honour, and rank, and affluence, to bring these wanderers to the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls.

“ Reviewing the characteristic features of his public ministry—in his devotion to God, and his overflowing affection to man—we might say of him, as an infidel physician once said of the late Rev. Dr. Gillies, of Glasgow, ‘He has a heart so large, and so warmed with Christian benevolence, that he seems as if he wished to carry every body to heaven with himself.’ We reflect with gratitude on his unbending adherence to the truth as it is in Jesus—on the singular endowments which he possessed—the extensive field of labour which he occupied—the very long and protracted term of more

than sixty-six years spent in the faithful ministry of the gospel—and for a measure of success in the conversion of sinners to a degree unprecedented, as we believe, in our times.

“The long and intimate knowledge which we possessed of our late excellent friend, warrants us to record his personal exemplification of the principles of the gospel which he preached. In him we have witnessed its sanctity, its celestial devotion, its amiable and active beneficence. His benevolence was not the effervescence of feeling, it was the product of permanent principle, the grace of the Holy Spirit; steady and active, and operative, in all the charities of life: in his own house diffusing comfort, order, and happiness; in his vicinity extending its tender solitudes to the poor, the aged, the afflicted, the widow, and the orphan. In the very musings of his mind he appeared to dwell in love, and it is said with inimitable sublimity, ‘he that dwells in love, dwells in God, and God in him.’

“In our late venerated friend we possessed one of the first, and of the oldest, fathers of the great voluntary associations of our age and country, destined, as we trust, to convey the light and influence of the gospel through the world.

“Never have we seen any Christian minister, of any degree or denomination, of his own church or of any other, in our times, fill so large a circle of the public mind. When we have walked with him in the crowded city, we have seen men’s eyes greeting him as they passed. If we have travelled with him into the country, every church and every chapel in which he ministered was crowded to hear him.

“The Venns, the Berridges, and others, his fellow labourers at the commencement of his course, he has long survived; and now the last star of that constellation has set! The last personal associate of the apostolic Whitefield has finished his course!

“At eighty-nine he was found diligently at work, when the great Master came. The message ‘Come up hither’ was announced, and the venerable servant responded—

'The hour of my departure's come,
I hear the voice that calls me home;
Now, oh, my Lord, let trouble cease,
Now let thy servant die in peace.'

"And now we shall see his face no more; we shall hear his voice no more at our board; no longer shall we have his sympathies, and the aid of his energetic and benevolent spirit. We resolve unanimously that this committee shall now take measures to join their Christian brethren of all denominations to do him honour at his grave.

The law of truth was in his mouth;
And iniquity was not found in his lips;
He walked with (God) in peace and equity,
And did turn many from iniquity.'

MALACHI ii. 6."

SECTION XI.

REVIEW OF MR. HILL'S CHARACTER AND LABOURS, AS A CHRISTIAN AND MINISTER.

HAVING traced Mr. Hill's history, in a general way, from his earliest years to the closing scenes of life, it now only remains for us to collect as it were into a focus, the various and scattered particles of light or information, intellectual, moral, and religious, which the narrative has elicited, and by endeavouring to form a just estimate of his character, point out to survivors the use they should make of his example. Mr. Hill, was, unquestionably, a comet in the religious world; he moved in an eccentric orbit; and though sometimes, happily, in the right path, yet often diverging from the centre, and consequently to be found among those who, as Milton says,

—————"build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances; who gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric, scribbled o'er
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb."

Were not the history of George Whitefield fresh in our recollection, we should be disposed to concede to Rowland Hill an originality of character; but the former was undoubtedly his prototype and model in many respects, though he was not a slavish imitator. If the merit of originality be justly due to Mr. Whitefield, as the chiefest apostle of Methodism, Mr. Hill was not a whit behind him, in his laborious exertions and disinterested efforts to spread abroad a savour of the knowledge of Christ in every place. They were, while living,

————— “ Arcades ambo,
Et cantare pares et respondere parati.”

And when death removed Mr. Whitefield from the scene of his labours, the prophet's mantle fell upon Mr. Hill, who wore it with equal grace. The same contempt of ecclesiastical statutes which in honour and conscience they were bound to observe, or relinquish all connection with the establishment—the same fearless exposure to personal danger from the rude insults of the rabble—the same noise and vociferation in their manner of address—the same effort at wit and pleasantry, interspersing their sermons with facetious anecdotes, *ad captandum vulgus*, which has ever been found a successful bait to popularity; all these were prominent features in both orators. But Mr. Hill's history is spread over a far more extended surface of time than that of his predecessor, and it was a much more eventful period—it gave birth to numerous benevolent associations for the spread of the Gospel at home and abroad, for instructing the ignorant and mitigating the sum of human misery, which was scarcely thought of in Mr. Whitefield's day; and in most of these excellent institutions Mr. Hill took an active part. But dropping the parallel, it may be useful to take a somewhat closer survey of the subject before us.

1. Mr. Hill's history presents us with a memorable instance of zealous exertion in publishing the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified Saviour. Having himself tasted that the Lord is gracious, he conferred not with flesh and blood, but became animated with an ardent desire to make others

partake with him in the same blessedness; he was willing to spend and be spent for the gospel's sake. In this good work he evinced extraordinary decision of mind; such as must be allowed to give proof of real earnestness in what he was engaged. Doubtless he had counted the cost, and was well apprised of the sacrifice he should be called to make of his ease and property and character, in pursuing the course which his judgment and convictions prescribed to him; but, having once put his hand to the plough, he does not appear to have ever looked back, or shewn any disposition to return to the world as his portion. And when we take a review of the extended duration of his ministry, a period of more than three-score years—the indefatigable labours which filled that space of time; and add to these the disinterestedness by which they were characterized, having, as he tells us on one occasion, never received more than forty shillings for preaching (and that probably not from choice), it would be no easy matter to find more substantial proofs of earnestness and sincerity in the conduct of any individual since the times of the martyrs. Mr. Weight informs us, that Mr. Hill preserved a memorandum of the number of sermons he had delivered, from which it appears, that up to June 10th, 1831, he had preached 22,291 times; and he has been known to deliver twenty-one sermons in the course of a single week! This cannot be called loitering in his Master's vineyard; and though it may be objected with truth, that his sermons cost him but little trouble in the preparation, it being more congenial with his views to “draw the bow at a venture,” and shoot his arrows at random; yet any one who has been a witness of his powerful declamation, especially in the earlier part of his ministry, and duly considers the astonishing expence of breath and physical force which it called into exercise, must marvel that he was so long able to sustain such exertions without sinking under them. Justly may it be said of him, that he was “in labours more abundant,” and that not from necessity, but choice, and a desire to promote the best interests of his fellow sinners.

In proof of Mr. Hill's zeal in the work of the ministry, and to show how much his heart and soul were in it, I shall here take the liberty of introducing a letter written by him to the Rev. Mr. Pentycross, dated Wells, August 1st, 1770, merely premising that Mr. Pentycross had been his fellow-collegian—had adopted similar sentiments in religion—been guilty of similar infractions of university statutes—and, like himself, met with repulse when he applied for ordination.

“MY DEAR PENTY,—I never sat down to write you with such a glee as at present, since I have known you. From the very bottom of my soul I wish you joy, on account of your being an outcast for God. This *good* news I had about nine days ago from Mr. Ivison, my dear friend, of Leeds. I could scarce help writing to you immediately, but have with much pain waited till you could have this letter free. Your rejection pleases me so much the better, on account of your having met with it *from my old friend the prelate of York*, who was the last, blessed be God, who put the same honour upon me. At first, when they began to reject me, I was coward enough to give way to my fears, and fool enough to conclude that unless I went forth overlaid with black, the very colour of the devil, I never should prevail; but blessed be God that every day's experience more fully proves to me that all my fears were nothing but deceit. Will my dear Penty (though he has frequently rebuked me for it) suffer me to boast myself a little; while I think I may venture to say I mean it not for *my* glory, but for *your* encouragement? The poorest of the poor, and the vilest of the vile, is the only character that at all times I mean to claim as my own; while at the same time may I be enabled to give all the glory to the power of triumphant grace, that in any measure helps us to go forward. Thousands and thousands attend all about these parts, and the evident power of great grace is abundantly amongst us. We have more than enough daily before our eyes, fully to convince us that no human garb, or human authority, shall ever be wanting, when the power of the gospel is present to heal. Upon the whole,

every day's experience more fully satisfies me that all things that have ever hitherto happened have been entirely for the best.

" I do not, however, my dear brother, mean to lay down my conduct as a rule for your walk ; no, I trust, from my soul, that I detest the thought of ever assuming that place in any man's conscience which so strictly belongs to God. My only and ardent prayer for you is, that God may abundantly baptize you with his Holy Spirit ; first fit you for his will, and then teach you what it is. If your eye is but single, and your heart indeed devoted to God's glory, you will not long be left in the dark.

" After having said thus much, I mention what follows in general terms. As a despised outcast, and servant of the dear Lord Jesus, I can answer for hundreds, yea, I may say, thousands, that long to have the honour to receive you as a messenger of the gospel in their open arms. I can answer for Bristol above all places besides—how gladly they would receive you as their own soul!—and as they have done me the unsought kindness to put me into the Tabernacle connexion in that city, and, having thereby some right to send you an invitation, I do, with multitudes of others, send you a most cordial one—if you find your heart inclined to cast your despised lot amongst us, come without delay. The harvest in these parts is truly very great, and our labourers are but few. Multitudes of fresh places are lately broken up, and promise wonderful for established works, and it only grieves us that we cannot help even half of our calls. Dear Captain Joss has been among us—he will, [assist us much] when he returns, which I believe will not be for some weeks, as he is now gone to preach about Wales. He has been preaching in Gloucestershire to larger congregations than ever Mr. Whitefield had ; 15,000, or upwards, was his congregation on the Sunday before last, on Hampton Common.

" Direct for me at the Rev. Mr. Kinsman's, Plymouth : but, as I am not certain whether that direction will be sufficient,

you had better ask Mr. Keene, or some of the London friends, for a surer direction; only, my dear Penty, do remember and write soon; and, when you write, pray don't forget to send me the particulars of your refusal.

“Dear love awaits dear dear Mr. Atkinson, and all other friends in London. As the last post brought me a very kind invitation from Mr. Keene to Tabernacle and Tottenham, I know not but that before the expiration of any long time, if God spares my life, I may beat up to that part of the kingdom;—in the interval, let not my dear Penty, nor any of our dear friends, ever cease to pray for their and your most sincere and affectionate”

“R. HILL.”

It may be here added, that Mr. Pencycross succeeded in obtaining ordination in the following year (1771), and was appointed to the curacy of Riegate, in Surrey, at which time he became intimately acquainted with the late Mr. Romaine, who kindly patronized him, and in 1774, obtained for him the Rectorship or Vicarage of Wallingford, in Berkshire, where he exercised his ministry for thirty-four years, dying on the 8th of Feb. 1808. Mr. Hill's letter is extremely characteristic of the writer; and while it serves to show how much his heart and soul were engaged in his vocation, it gives a pleasing specimen of his kindly feelings towards his friend, and his readiness to cheer and encourage him to bear up under his disappointment.

And while expatiating on the subject of Mr. Hill's zealous exertions in diffusing the knowledge of Christ, let us not overlook the fact of the *general* correctness of his doctrinal sentiments. He maintained with a firm and unwavering hand the universal depravity of mankind, in consequence of the fall of our first parents, whereby human nature became corrupted at its source, and all their posterity are “shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin,” so as to need regenerating grace to restore them to the favour and image of their Maker—to enable them to love God, and keep his commandments. He held that the salvation of guilty men was all of free and

sovereign grace, and not of works, lest any man should boast. That the blessed God, out of pure philanthropy, to display the riches of his grace, and manifest his love to a guilty world, sent his only begotten Son, in the fulness of time, to make atonement for their sins, and by reconciling the claims of justice with the exercise of mercy, vindicate the honours of the divine government in the remission of sins, and justification of the ungodly. His views of the person, character, offices, and grace of the Redeemer were strictly consonant to the oracles of God. In all his preaching and in all his writings he held forth Jesus of Nazareth to be the SON OF GOD, or God manifest in human nature; an eternally divine person, the maker and upholder of all things; the object of worship to angels and men; yet voluntarily laying down his life as the ransom price of our redemption, and thus expiating sin by the sacrifice of himself. He contended for the perfection of this sacrifice, and held it forth in his preaching as the only foundation of hope to the lost and undone, calling upon sinners to look to it, and build upon it for time and eternity. He was moreover a strenuous advocate for the honour of divine grace, insisting upon it, that wherever the gospel was understood and believed, it would lead to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," and influence the believer to "live righteously, soberly, and godly, in this present world"—it would purify the heart from the love and practice of sin, and lead to press after holiness in the fear of God. Thus while he viewed Socinianism as a monstrous heresy, totally subversive of the Gospel of God, and most ruinous to the souls of men, he steered his course between Arminianism on the one hand, and Antinomianism on the other; the former he rejected, as leading the awakened sinner to take refuge in Pharisaical self-righteousness, and the latter to build presumption upon principle, and relax those obligations to holiness which flow from redeeming love, and gratitude for pardoning mercy. His views of these subjects may be seen in his "Village Dialogues," from which I have already made copious extracts in a former section.

I may remark further, that in the steadfastness of his faith, and the consistency with which he held his doctrinal sentiments, Mr. Hill set a praiseworthy example to his contemporaries in the ministry, and to posterity. Since the time that the “Aurora Borealis,” that far-famed-*northern-light*, visited the metropolis of England, and began to display its corruscations in the neighbourhood of the Regent’s Park, exhaling pestilential vapours; first prognosticating the resurrection of Judaism, during the thousand years’ reign of the saints—then in strains of the boldest blasphemy insisting on the sinfulness of our Lord’s humanity—and now contending for a renewal of miraculous powers to be bestowed on the church—what affecting instances of vacillation has it fallen to our lot to witness! To his praise be it recorded, that Mr. Hill was never carried away by any of these delusions; nor did he ever give into them for a single hour; on the contrary, he uniformly raised his voice against them, as originating with the grand adversary and destroyer of souls.

But while I bear this, as I think, just and fair testimony to Mr. Hill’s soundness in the faith, and to his steady adherence to “the form of sound words,” as contrasted with that instability and fickle-mindedness—that “being carried about with divers and strange doctrines,” which is so observable in many in our day, I would not be understood as intending to intimate that I consider Mr. Hill ever to have been a profound theologian; to have declared all the counsel of God, and to have rightly divided the word of truth; or to have been an able minister of the New Testament. Assuredly he had no pretensions to claims of this kind. His preaching was restricted to the *first principles* of the oracles of God; the doctrine of the fall of our first parents, and its effects on their posterity: the necessity of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; the resurrection of the dead, and a final judgment. While handling these important topics he was at home, and it was his constant endeavour to awaken sinful mortals from the state of stupid insensibility into which sin has plunged them, and point

them to the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. In this respect, Mr. Hill was, what his predecessor, George Whitefield, used to describe himself to be, viz. "a rough mason in the quarry, hewing out stones for others to smoothe and polish" for the church or temple of God. There are, however, many other most important topics connected with the Christian ministry, about which Mr. Hill rarely, if ever, troubled his head; and those relate to "the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." In fact, had he entered properly into the doctrine of Christ's good confession before the Roman governor, as respects the nature of his kingdom; its subjects, laws, immunities and privileges; he never could have said or written the wild and extravagant things that unfortunately for his character, he has done. But, he was *Rowland-never-wrong*, in his own estimation; and in relation to these topics, had little ear to give to "what the Spirit saith unto the churches," as will presently appear.

2. There were few things for which Mr. Hill took more credit to himself, or on which he was so much disposed to plume himself, as for his catholicism, his enlarged charity, and his freedom from bigotry. Now, though I have repeatedly touched upon this subject in a cursory manner, in the preceding pages, I feel disposed, in this place, to resume it, and examine it more narrowly in the light of the New Testament; especially as it is one of those points on which superficial minds are very apt to be led astray.

When the London Missionary Society was first formed, Mr. Hill appears to have contemplated the scene with pious, if not rapturous emotion. Churchmen and Dissenters of various descriptions, all agreed to merge their differences, and so far lay aside the party distinctions which had prevailed among them, as cordially to unite together as brethren, in the execution of a benevolent plan for Christianizing the Heathen. By mutual agreement, wherever the fruits of their Missionary labours appeared, the converts were to be left to follow their own judgment in what regarded the formation of churches,

their plan of worship, and rules of discipline. But the Missionary Union was carried a point beyond this. At each anniversary meeting, all who were friendly to the object of the society, of whatever sect or party they might be, were invited to assemble around the table of the Lord, and jointly partake of the symbols of his broken body and shed blood; thus recognizing each other as members of Christ's mystical body, notwithstanding their diversified sentiments respecting the nature of his kingdom and the order of his house. One of the sermons preached at the formation of the Missionary Society, (24th Sept. 1795), was delivered by the late David Bogue, of Gosport, who, not a wit less enthusiastic in the cause than Mr. Hill, thus addressed the assembled multitude at Tottenham-court Chapel:—

“ We have now before us a pleasing spectacle; Christians of different denominations, although differing in points of church government, united in forming a society for propagating the gospel among the heathen. This is a new thing in the Christian church. Some former societies have accepted donations from men of different denominations; but the government was confined to one. But here are Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Independents, all united in one society, all joining to form its laws, to regulate its institutions, and manage its various concerns. *Behold us here assembled with one accord to attend the funeral of bigotry.* And may she be buried so deep that not a particle of her dust may ever be thrown up on the face of the earth. I could almost add, *cursed be the man who shall attempt to raise her from the grave;*” page 130, of Printed Sermon, entitled “ Objections against a Mission, &c. considered.”

Having thus happily succeeded in burying Old Bigotry, and anathematizing the man who should attempt to raise her from the grave, Mr. Hill wrote the following Epitaph, which was sung, no doubt, with pious enthusiasm, after the interment of the monster.

“ Here lies Old Bigotry, abhorr’d
 By all that love our common Lord;
 No more his influence shall prove,
 The torment of the sons of love.

We celebrate with holy mirth,
 This monster’s death—of hellish birth:
 Ne’er may his hateful influence rise,
 Again to blast our sacred joys.

Glory to God, we now are one,
 United to one head alone;
 With undivided hearts we praise
 Our God, for his uniting grace.

Let names, and sects, and parties fall,
 Let Jesus Christ be all in all;
 Thus like thy saints above shall we
 Be one with each, as one with thee.’

Thus terminated the first act of this pious drama; bigotry was dead and buried, and a *requiem* sung to his manes! There were, however, a few cool-headed bye-standers, who surveyed the whole imposing ceremony of the interment of this hideous monster, with a somewhat sceptical turn of mind, and could not help suspecting that all was not right in this affair; that whatever Messrs. Bogue and Hill might wish to make others believe, yet still the spirit of bigotry was not quite extinct even in those who exclaimed the loudest against it. In particular, they could not but be surprised to find the Rev. Dr. Haweis, in a sermon preached about that time at Surrey Chapel, displaying his most extensive catholicism towards Protestant Dissenters, by an attempt to render them odious, as “holding convivial meetings for the purpose of consulting on the best method of supporting the Dissenting interest,” and embellishing his sarcasm by the mention of their introducing “pipes and tobacco.” Nor were they less struck with the conduct of the Rev. Rowland Hill, who in his famous discourse on the formation of the Missionary Society poured forth an anathema, in the name of the Lord, against all those of his own brethren, who thought proper to stand neuter for the moment, and did not see it their duty to lend

their hand or their purse to the "South Sea project;" for to such he did not scruple to apply the denunciation of the angel, Judg. v. 23, "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly, the inhabitants thereof, because they came not to the help of the Lord." Now these and various other things, which then occurred, looked questionable, and infused doubts into the minds of some, whether there was not a mistake somewhere about the death of this said bigotry; and whether, when properly examined, the whole of this extraordinary hubbub about the interment of the monster, really amounted to any thing more than a *declaration of indifference to the grand principles of Protestantism*, or a disposition on the part of the Dissenters to sacrifice their distinguishing principles and tenets from mere complaisance to a certain description of episcopal clergymen.

Liberal, however, as were these concessions on the part of the Dissenters, it does not seem to have long satisfied Mr. Hill; and, accordingly, at no very distant period, we find him thus attacking the whole body in one of his publications: "We (at Surrey Chapel) have never found it necessary to resort to those rigid, and I think I may say, *unscriptural* rules, adopted by those who wish to keep their *little party* to themselves. Such as are admitted among us, if permitted by others, are at liberty to go elsewhere also; only, if they come with us we expect to know their lives*. Hence we have none of the complaints of those poor *crippled* creatures, that have given themselves up to any of those houses of *spiritual confinement*, expressing how glad they should be to show brotherly love and affection to other congregations also, but that they dare not, because it is against the laws of *their* church, and that positive excommunication would be the

* He had just before compared the city of London to a great wilderness, adding, "*We seldom know how our next neighbour lives* : I have, therefore, found great difficulty in announcing, on three different occasions, before all the communicants, the names and abodes of those who wish more stately to join the communion," viz. at Surrey Chapel!!!

result:—Thus punishing a violation of their *bigotted laws among themselves* with equal severity as they would punish another for adultery or theft, or any other notorious violation of the express laws of God. Now, how far these *little sectarian parties*, have a right to divide the Church of Christ, which ought to be united, as we are all one in our living Head, I leave them to determine. The sins of *heresy* and *schism* must rest somewhere; and if the one term means to pick out, or to take away, and the other to divide, or rend, we may easily judge whether these sectarian, separating churches, are scriptural or not*.”

Here the reader has a precious specimen of that catholic charity for which Mr. Hill was such a vociferous advocate. The tables are completely turned upon the Dissenters; their churches stand branded with the guilt of heresy and schism; and on what ground? Why, because they consider that in the apostolic churches they have a plan of proceeding, or a rule given them, whereby to regulate all the affairs of the house of God, and because they consider themselves under an obligation to abide by it! We have lately seen Mr. Hill in his celebrated “Sale of Curates,” giving up his own established church of England as *schismatical* in having dissented from the most ancient apostolical church of Rome; and now the dissenting churches are guilty of the sins of heresy and schism in separating from *her*! At one time he tells us, “much has been said of late upon the subject of *schism*, as well as enthusiasm; and truly serious persons, who abhor both of those in their evil sense, have been charged with maintaining or abetting them. But the charge is misapplied, and should have been directed elsewhere. Those are the worst *schismatics*, the real and most dangerous dissenters from the doctrine, and the greatest disgrace to the discipline of the church of England, who while they profess to be its ministers and members, do most strenuously contradict by evil life, or

* Warning to Professors, 3d edition, 1806, octavo, p. 64.

heterodox principles, the fundamentals of the Christian religion, and pervert the true end and purpose for which our own, or indeed any other establishment was protected by secular laws." Anon he declares "vengeance against narrow-minded bigots, who finding the word of God uncompliant to designs like theirs, have combined together to support their dogmas according to certain rules of their own creating: and all those as contrary to the sacred designs of God, as the designs of Christianity can be to those of Mahomet, the Pope, or the Devil." Presently we find him acknowledging "PRIMITIVE PRECEDENT," and admitting that "*the nearer we act according to it, the more we may expect the blessing of the Great Head of the Church upon our labours.*" And yet, in the very same page he tells us, that "with respect to the order which God has decreed for the government of his house, *nothing was precisely determined*, but we are referred to *general rules*, and these were brought forward just as circumstances demanded.*" As to himself, he has "a predilection in favour of the established church (of England) according to the outlines of her general plan;" that is, with her Popish Hierarchy—the badge of Antichrist: but "the internal government of every (Christian) church must be congregational—*strictly independent!*" Such is the confused and contradictory style in which the good man wrote upon a subject which it would have been wise in him never to have meddled with.

In the paragraph lately quoted, the reader has a fine sample of that meek and gentle spirit which is the genuine product of catholic charity! One cannot but remark, how the phrases, "heresy and schism"—"unscriptural rules"—"crippled creature's"—"sectarian churches"—"houses of spiritual confinement"—"bigotted laws," &c. &c. dance through the extract in all the mazes of metaphorical confusion! The whole may be taken as a summary of all that has been written

* Journal of a Tour, p. 139.

by Mr. Hill and others on that side of the question; and considering it in that point of view, it may be useful to the living to offer a few observations upon it, for the purpose of shewing how baseless is the foundation upon which the whole rests, and how easy is the defence of the strict communionists in the present instance. To circumscribe the inquiry and bring it within the limits which are compatible with the present undertaking, we shall select the case of the Baptists refusing to communicate at the Lord's table with Pædobaptists, though every intelligent reader will perceive that the very same arguments will be found equally valid when applied to the case of Independent churches not admitting members of the national establishment, such as Mr. Hill and his clerical allies, to hold occasional fellowship with them. The Baptists, it may be recollected, are severely taken to task for their bigotry, in the preface to the "Village Dialogues."

Now the bigotry—sectarianism—and sin of the Baptists, so much complained of, consists in their making Baptism a term of communion. But their answer to this is, that Christ himself has made it such, and that therefore they have no authority to dispense with it in favour of any individuals whom they regard as unbaptized, however favourably, in other respects, they may think of their Christian character. The principle on which they proceed is this; that as there is only *one faith* which is essential to salvation, so there is also *one baptism* which corresponds with it, and which by the will of its Institutor is inseparably connected, at least with the scriptural confession of that faith (Mark xvi. 16,) and so essentially necessary to the visible communion of saints. Whether they consider the order of Christ's commission, the practice of the inspired apostles in executing it, or the nature and import of the ordinances themselves, they think it clear, that Baptism must always precede admission into a church, or communion in the Lord's supper. They regard the practice of infant-sprinkling in the light of a mere human invention, one of the main pillars of Popery; and, as such, are bound to protest against it. To

receive any persons into their churches on the ground that they have undergone that unauthorized rite at a time when they were incapable of hearing, understanding, and believing the Gospel, would be to countenance error, and become partakers of other men's sins. They say, therefore, that were they to receive into their communion such persons as neglect or despise a plain and positive institution of the Saviour, it would be to assume a dispensing power, which in them would be highly inconsistent and criminal. Christ has committed his truths and ordinances to his churches to keep and hold fast until he come again, Rev. ii. 25; but not to dispense with in favour of any persons whatever their character may be. Consequently, they are not only bound to observe his institutions themselves, but to take heed that every member of the body with which they are connected, observe them also.

In opposition to this dutiful line of conduct, Mr. Hill loudly complains, that by making baptism a term of communion, they become guilty of the sin of schism, it becomes an occasion of dividing the real children of God. The Baptists reply—" *We admit the fact, but REFUSE THE BLAME.*" We freely admit, that there are multitudes of God's dear children unenlightened as to baptism; many of them have never attended to the subject; and others, through the influence of custom and erroneous instruction, have taken up with infant-sprinkling in its stead. It is also a fact, that while they and we continue in our present circumstances, we must remain divided as to *visible* church communion. But the question is, Which of us are to blame? Those who make conscience of abiding firm by the scripture rule, or they who do not comply with it? And whether should Christians unite in observing Christ's institutions or in dispensing with them? Now the very statement of the question is a sufficient answer to such as hold the institutions of Christ to be of indispensable obligation. We are grieved to think that so many of the real children of God are living in the neglect of the very first ordinance of the gospel: we endeavour to hold it forth to them consistently,

by our example, doctrine, and separate communion—we cordially invite them to fellowship with us in this, and all the other institutions of Christ, according to the order in which he has placed them; and we earnestly pray to their Father and ours, that he would dispel their ignorance, remove their prejudices, and subject their consciences to this and every other part of his revealed will; but while they remain in their present mind, we dare not meet them any nearer, nor step over the sacred boundaries which Christ hath marked out in his word, in order to give them the right hand of fellowship.”

Such is the apology which the Baptists tender for their conduct; but neither Rowland Hill, nor Robert Hall, nor any other of the sticklers for mixed communion have ever yet been able to show its inconsistency with the doctrine of Christ and his apostles. They have indeed loudly vociferated “bigotry, sectarianism, want of charity, heresy, and schism,” and a thousand other opprobrious epithets; but these prove nothing so much as their own *disaffection* to the rule of the word of God, and their *disinclination* to be regulated by it in what relates to the kingdom of Christ in this world. The line of conduct which they (the Baptists) pursue is indeed very opposite to that profane compliant charity so much cried up in the professing world, which has neither the Scriptures for its rule, nor the truth for its object—a charity which esteems conscientiousness in error equivalent to soundness in the faith, and legitimates a kind of Christianity which stands independent of keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus: but it is perfectly agreeable to true charity, which consists in love to the truth, and to those who are of the truth for its sake, as perceiving it dwelling in them by its genuine effects. If we esteem all the commandments of the gospel to be plain, important, and indispensable; if we see them to be effects of divine wisdom, benevolence, and love; if we are persuaded that the interest of the disciples of Christ lies in *observing* them, and that there is either sin or danger in neglecting them; then surely, regard to the divine authority,

love to the truth, and charity to men, all imperiously require that we dispense with none of them.

Mr. Hill is pleased to deny that the New Testament presents us with any plan of the apostolic churches; for, says he, "Had such a plan made a part of divine revelation, there would certainly have been less disputings about it*." But if the plan of the apostolic churches makes no part of the divine revelation, it must be worse than idle to talk about "primitive precedent," and the "wisdom of acting according to it." In this way Mr. Hill answers himself. He thinks it "a *supposable* idea, that the seven Asiatic churches might have adopted different modes of public worship, and perhaps of a government also, and still esteemed themselves as in Christian fellowship with each other†." Suppositions are easily made, but they are unworthy of an answer in cases of this kind. If the churches of Christ, subsequent to the times of the apostles, have no plan or precedent left them for their guidance and direction in those churches which were formed under the supervision of inspired guides, for what purpose was the history of their proceedings committed to writing? The church in Jerusalem, for instance, which set the pattern, and formed a "precedent" for all others to copy after;—here, the different branches of public worship are laid before us with sufficient minuteness, Acts ii. 41-7, and the whole history of the first planting of Christianity, which is given us in the Acts of the Apostles, is in perfect harmony with what took place at Jerusalem. The ambassadors of the prince of peace went forth in all directions, preaching the word, and wherever, through the blessing of Heaven, men were converted to the faith, they separated the disciples from the unbelieving world, formed them into a church state, and delivered to them the same ordinances which were first instituted at Jerusalem, to be observed by them for the glory of God and their own

* Warning to Professors, p. 64.

† Second Letter to Mr. G. Burder.

edification, in the view of Christ's second coming. The inspired apostles acting under their Lord's commission, set the first churches in order, ordained elders and deacons in every church for the maintaining of regularity in all their proceedings, and the proper exercise of the gifts bestowed on the body by the Great Head of the Church—and left particular instructions in their writings what description of men should be chosen to those offices to the end of time. The apostle Paul, in Eph. iv. 4—6, particularly specifies the grand catholic unities which are essential to every real church of Christ—the members form *one body*, they have all *one Spirit*, one *hope* of their calling, one *Lord*, one *faith*, one *baptism*, one *God and Father* of all. The bond of union common to all the churches was their mutual charity; “they loved one another for the truth's sake which dwelleth in them;” and their union in a church state gave them an opportunity of exercising this divine principle, love, in its various ramifications; watching over each other in faithfulness, administering counsel, admonition, reproof, consolation, &c. as the case required, and so they were fellow-helpers of each other's faith and charity and holiness; bearing one another's burdens, they fulfilled the law of Christ, his new commandment of brotherly love, by which he would have his disciples distinguished from the world around them.

It has never yet been shown by Mr. Hill or any other writer what there is *defective* in the writings of the evangelists and apostles to constitute a perfect rule of faith and practice to the churches of Christ in all ages and countries, under every form of political government, and every description of civilization. He has indeed taken no little pains in several of his tracts to quibble at various parts of this divine economy, and explain away or involve in mystery what he did not like: but the real ground of all this may be easily seen. He was not so destitute of discernment as not to perceive, that the primitive church order and worship, as laid down in the New Testament, was in many important respects completely at variance

with the plans pursued at Surrey Chapel; and that were he to adopt it and follow it out consistently in all its parts, the whole scheme of things which he had devised and matured would instantly be turned topsy-turvy. Were the order of the apostolic churches introduced at Surrey Chapel, in one month the thousands who frequent the place would be reduced to so many hundreds—perhaps scores, or dozens! In short, Mr. Hill was perfectly aware that *it would never do!* and though that order be of divine appointment—the result of the wisdom, grace, and love of the ascended Saviour, and the *only* plan of worship which comports with the nature of his kingdom, and the designs of his grace, in training up his subjects in a state of disconformity to this present evil world, and meetness for his eternal kingdom, there are comparatively but few of his professed disciples that have a hearty relish for it. When the Missionary union was formed, the grave divines who were at the head of it agreed by mutual consent to place every thing relating to the order and worship of a Christian church, in the class of “Non-essentials,” and in that light they have continued to regard them ever since. Such persons as had sufficient tenderness of conscience to demur to this, and consider themselves bound by duty and affection to “observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded,” and his apostles instituted in his name, have never ceased to be branded with the opprobrious epithets of *sectarians* and *bigots*—churches constituted upon this plan are dubbed (mad-houses) houses of “spiritual confinement”—“little sectarian parties”—“guilty of the sins of heresy and schism!” Such are the polished epithets bestowed upon them by Mr. Hill; and all this is to be considered the overflowings of catholic charity! I lately laid before the reader an extract from the pen of Dr. Wardlaw, relating to the constitution of the primitive church, and its peculiar adaptedness to the nature of Christ’s kingdom: let us hear him once more on the point in hand, viz. holding the apostolic institutions as “non essentials.”

“I cannot pass from this part of my subject, (says Dr.

Wardlaw) without an observation or two on the importance of such inquiries. It has many a time, I am aware, been *over-rated*; and it always *is over-rated*, when aught that is external is either substituted for what is internal, or is contemplated in any other light than as a means to an end. But the propensity to *under-rate* it is still more prevalent. It is the fashion of the times to make light of it; and all who bend their attention to it, or write, or talk about it, are set down as mere ‘tithers of mint, and anise, and cummin:’ a rather unfortunate allusion, inasmuch as, while the Saviour says of ‘the weightier matters of the law,’ ‘These ought ye to have done,’ he immediately subjoins, even as to their contemning tithing, ‘And not leave the other undone.’ But, seriously, the constitution of the church, though not an end, is a means to an end. The end is its own spiritual edification, along with the advancement of the great interests of divine truth, the glory of the divine name, and the salvation of a guilty world. *The church was instituted for these ends, and her constitution was adapted by divine wisdom to their attainment.* In all other cases we estimate the value of the means by the magnitude of the end. So should we here. Contempt of the end is involved in contempt of the means. We value highly a good system of civil government. But the value we attach to it is not on its own account, as a mere matter of skilful arrangement, and regular subordination and political display; it is for the sake of the ends which government in civil society is intended to answer, which are felt by all to be of the highest temporal consequence; the security of person, property, liberty, and life, and the promotion of general comfort, prosperity, social confidence, and happiness. We value the means, because we value the end; and we esteem that scheme of government the best, and appreciate it accordingly, which is in theory best adapted for working out these ends, and whose practical efficiency corresponds with its theoretical excellence. Why should Christians, while they are so sensible of the value of good government in the state, smile at the very mention of

the order and government of the church, as if it were a matter quite unworthy the serious regard of a devout and spiritual mind? Whatever our divine master has reckoned it worth his while to command, it must surely be worth our while to obey: and they who are not aware of the intimate relation between the constitution of the church and her spiritual, which is her only true prosperity, must be very ignorant of the tendencies of general principles, and must have glanced over the pages of her history with a strangely unobservant eye. These externalities, we are often told, are not religion. Granted: but are bread and water of no value, because they are not life? If they contribute to sustain life, then life is the measure of their value; and in like manner, though outward institutions are not religion, yet, if they contribute to promote religion, religion becomes the measure of *their* value *."

This view of the matter, it must be allowed on all hands, differs very widely from that taken of it by Mr. Hill, and the other founders of the London Missionary Society; but which of them is most consonant to the voices of Christ and his apostles, it behoves every reader to judge for himself. "To the law and to the testimony: if men speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." We are commanded by an apostle to "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." There cannot be a surer proof of falsehood in any spirit or doctrine than its leading men to undervalue, or make light of any saying or duty enjoined upon us by Christ or his apostles. On this subject I shall take the liberty of quoting another SCOTCH AUTHOR of recent date, who treats the subject with equal perspicuity and power with Dr. Wardlaw. Thus he writes:

"Among those who acknowledge in general that the word of God is the only rule of Christian faith and practice, there

* Sermon on Civil Establishments of Christianity, p. 11, 12.

are many who, in direct opposition to that principle, claim a liberty to add to, or dispense with that rule, according as the difference of times, established customs, or other circumstances may, in their opinion, require. Many pass high encomiums on primitive Christianity, and profess to admire the divine purity of its doctrines, and the beautiful simplicity of its institutions, worship, order, and discipline, who yet freely censure every attempt to revive it. It is impossible for candour itself to reconcile this with a due regard to the word of God, unless we can suppose that they look upon that word as calculated only for the first age of Christianity, or as authorizing the superstitious institutions of succeeding generations. Those who would be thought liberal in their sentiments, despise what they call the little singularities of parties; and they are right so far as these singularities are of human invention. They do not, however, stop here, but treat many things in the New Testament itself as matters of indifference, or non-essentials: but whatever may be said of the comparative importance of things, *it is essential to the character of a true Christian, to consider himself as indispensably bound to believe and practise all things whatever Christ hath revealed or enjoined in his word, so far as he understands it: so that no article of the faith once delivered to the saints, nor any of the least of Christ's commandments, however singular and unfashionable they may be, can, in the fear of God, be treated as the trivial nostrums of a party.* True Christianity is the most benevolent and generous religion that ever appeared on earth; but at the same time it is a very singular institution; it is not of this world, but quite opposite to the spirit and course of it: therefore such as unreservedly follow Christ, and conscientiously observe his sayings, must necessarily be distinguished from the world and looked upon as a party*."

I have been the more particular on this point, and dwelt the

* Christ's Commission to his Apostles illustrated, by Archibald M'Lean, Preface, p. viii.

more largely upon it, for this sole reason, that I think it due to the cause of God and truth, and those who would strictly adhere to that cause, to point out the error of Mr. Hill's judgment in the matter, and show how totally groundless were his charges of bigotry and sectarianism, as applied to those conscientious dissenters whose sole aim it is to regulate all their church affairs according to the will of their God and Saviour, as made known in the New Testament. As hath been formerly remarked, p. 162, &c. even though through an excess of scupulosity, arising from an anxious desire to be found "obedient in all things," the churches referred to might be thought in some instances unnecessarily rigid; or, to use a phrase of frequent occurrence in Mr. Hill's writings, "righteous overmuch;" yet still I must contend, that real candour, or that charity which thinketh no evil, would respect the motive in which such conduct originated, and instead of holding them up to scorn, contempt, and ridicule, as Mr. Hill often did, comparing the churches to spiritual mad-houses (!) he would have thrown the mantle of love over what he considered a failing, and tendered that apology for them which he well knew how to do when it fell in with his inclination. But here his own bigotry flamed forth with a vengeance, and he was ready to anathematize them with bell, book, and candle! and this is the true and genuine spirit of that Catholic charity which is so much cried up in the religious world, and for which Mr. Hill clamoured so loudly.

I am here reminded of some observations on the subject under consideration, which were submitted to the public, by a Pædobaptist writer of the last century; and they are so pertinent and just, that though the passage be somewhat long, I shall not scruple to insert it in this place; and I am the more inclined to do it from the consideration that the pamphlet from which I quote has long been out of print, and is now so scarce, that a copy of it is not to be procured at any price*.

* The following is the title of the pamphlet referred to—"Strictures on Modern Simony and the Crime of Simon Magus; or an Enquiry into

The author has been taking a review of the setting up of Christ's kingdom in the world, by the preaching of the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, and collecting the converts in Jerusalem into a church state, with the ordinances of public worship which they statedly attended to—from which he proceeds to contrast with it what commonly prevailed among the dissenting churches of his own day. Thus he proceeds,

The want of that unity in the faith, hope, and love of the truth which appeared so strikingly among the apostolic churches, “is now supplied by the Catholic charity, which resembles the charity commended by Paul, in only this one circumstance, that it *groweth exceedingly* in most of the churches. Among the stricter sort, it goes chiefly under the name of *Forbearance*. We shall be much mistaken if we think that, by this soft and agreeable word, is chiefly meant the tenderness and compassion inculcated by the precepts of Jesus Christ and his Apostles. It strictly means an agreement to differ quietly, about the doctrines and commandments of the Gospel without interruption of visible fellowship. They distinguish carefully between *fundamentals*, or things necessary to be believed and practised; and *circumstantial*s, or things that are indifferent. Now whatever foundation there may be for such a distinction in *human systems* of religion, it certainly looks very ill-becoming in the churches of Christ to question *how far* HE is to be believed and obeyed. Our

Mr. Madan's Account of Simony, in his late Answer to the Faithful Narrative of Facts relating to the Presentation of Mr. H——'s [afterwards the celebrated Dr. Haweis] to the rectory of Aldwinkle in Northamptonshire: tending to show the fallacy of his reasoning upon the Ecclesiastical Laws; and the error of his conscience concerning the Sanctity of Ecclesiastical Preferments: with various Observations on the Kingdom of the Clergy, comparing it with the Kingdom of Jesus Christ.” London, 1767.

The facts which occasioned the writing of this pamphlet have long since sunk into oblivion, and are not now worth reviving—but they reflect indelible disgrace on the memory of a renowned LL. D. who took an active part in the affairs of the London Missionary Society!!

modern churches have not indeed quite settled this matter ; but they have nearly agreed to hold all those things indifferent which would be inconvenient and disreputable, and to have communion together, in observing somewhat like the customs of their forefathers.

“ Many of the plainest sayings of Jesus Christ and the Apostles are treated with high contempt by the advocates of this forbearance ; such as the rule of [dealing with] offences, in Matt. ch. xviii. the prohibition concerning treasuring up riches on earth, in Matt. v. and elsewhere ; the imitation of Christ’s humility and kindness, enjoined in John, xiii. ver. 14, 15. These, and various other things, held *sacred* among the first Christians, are held even *ridiculous* among the modern professors of religion. The common people are persuaded to believe that all the ancient institutions of Christianity were merely *local* and *temporary*, excepting such as the learned have agreed to be suitable to these times ; or which have been customarily observed by their predecessors. But it would well become the DOCTORS IN DIVINITY to show by what *authority* any injunction of God can be revoked, besides his own ; or, how any man’s conscience can be lawfully released by custom, example, or human authority from observing such things as were instituted by the Apostles of Christ in his name.

“ This corrupt forbearance had no allowed place in the primitive churches. The apostle in Eph. iv. required of them to “adorn their vocation with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another IN LOVE.” But had they dispensed with the laws of Christ for convenience and ease, it had been forbearing one another IN HATRED ; for those laws were expressions of his love—the most fervent love that ever was shown among men, directed by infallible wisdom. Whosoever therefore would obliterate them, or any how attempt to change them, must either suppose himself *wiser* than Jesus Christ, or a greater friend to mankind ; he must be moved either by an enormous *self-conceit*, or by the spirit of *malevolence*.

“ Although the modern charity wears very much the appearance of humility and good-will to men, yet it stands in direct opposition to that love of THE TRUTH by which the primitive Christians were distinguished; insomuch that, if any such churches should now appear as those to whom the sacred epistles were directed, they must be content to bear reproach as *they* formerly did, and be hated for their *bigotry* and *sectarianism*.

“ The more *thinking* part of religious men, observing what great mischiefs have arisen from contentions about truth, and being, perhaps, a little *sceptically* inclined, have found it most desirable to *let truth alone*; and to concern themselves chiefly about living *profitably* in civil society. To be of some religion is but decent; and the interests of human life require that it be popular and compliant. If men have different notions of Jesus Christ, his divinity, his sacrifice, his kingdom, and the customs of his religion, even from what the apostles seemed to have, *charity* demands that we think well of their *religious* characters, notwithstanding this. These are dubious and difficult points about which great and good men have differed! It is unbecoming the *modesty* of *wise men* to be confident on any side; and ‘contending earnestly’ for opinions injures the peace of the Christian church! Thus kind and humble is modern *charity*. But it looks back with an evil eye on that rude sort of kindness with which the followers of Jesus propagated his Gospel; presenting to men the most melancholy view of their guilt, and leaving them no hope but through righteousness perfect and divine. It shudders to hear them enforcing his words, and saying, ‘He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: he that believeth not shall be damned.’ But it is comforted by thinking that there were many things peculiar to the first ages, and, perhaps, this may be one of them. To say the least, the corruptors of Christianity have much reason to wish so.

“ This prevailing charity stands eminently distinguished from that which the Scriptures inculcate, in this respect: the

latter encreased in proportion to the unanimity of Christians in loving the doctrine of Jesus Christ ; the former encreases in proportion to its diffidence and uncertainty about that doctrine. Instead of rejoicing *in*, or with *the truth*, it rejoices in contemplating the *admirable piety* that may be produced from so many different, yea, opposite principles !

“ There has been much reproach cast on the Quakers, for their tenacious adherence to their opinions and customs, even by those who are in the main very much agreed with them. Of what importance is it how they dress ? They affect plainness and a sort of uniformity, probably from the same principle which has clothed the clergy in black. Affectation, and pride in such distinctions, are contemptible in any man ; and much more if he attempts to vindicate them by the word of God. The experienced persons among the dissenters and the Methodists, are of one mind with the Quakers in what they all esteem the *essentials* of religion. What imaginable difference is there between *grace in the heart*, which the former admire, and the spirit, *the light within*, which is the great arcanum of the latter ? They equally mean, the secret operation of invisible power making them more acceptable to God, and supplying more or less the want of perfect righteousness. They agree to call the Scriptures of truth *a dead letter*. The external observances of the Christians are rejected by them both as superstitious and carnal, under pretence of cultivating the private *religion of the heart* ; as though that religion were the better for being kept secret, or like some combustible powder, acquired an additional strength by being close pent up !

“ It is very true that the power of godliness has often suffered in a zealous contention about rites and ceremonies ; but the contention has been chiefly about forms of *human* device. The Christians of old time were taught not to dispute about the institutions of their LORD, but to observe them thankfully ; and hereby they expressed their affection to him and to each other. If that *affection* is granted to be more

important than the *tokens* of it, still it would be unjust to infer that the latter have no obligation, which would imply that Christ and the Apostles meant nothing by their precepts.

“The Methodists have not indeed gone so far as their *spiritual brethren* (the Quakers) have done in rejecting all external ceremonies; but they are taught to believe that all concern about the ancient order and customs of the Christians is mere *party-spirit*, and injurious to the devout exercises of the heart. Thus the modern charity vaunts itself in answering better purposes than could be accomplished by keeping the commandments of Christ. It produces a more extensive and generous communion; and animates the devotion of men without perplexing them by uncertain doctrines, or rigorous self-denial. But however excellent in its effects, it has its origin, not in the faith of Jesus Christ, or in love to God, but it is the *first-born-child of scepticism and infidelity*. For although it supposes some revelation from God, and some honour due to Jesus Christ, it claims a right to dispense with both: to choose what in his doctrine and religion is *fit to be believed*, and observed; and thus obscures the whole in a mist of uncertainty. As *this charity*, therefore, has become essential to the various churches of Dissenters, and the fruits of it abound in them, as they do in all the world, we shall be vindicated in saying, that Christianity is not visibly exemplified in such societies, any more than it is in the national establishments.

“Upon the whole, the religion of Jesus is not to be understood but by the sacred writings of the Evangelists and Apostles; it is practicable in every age, without a continuance of miracles; for it consists in believing what he has said, and doing what he has required. It is, however, understood and practised only through the power of the Holy Spirit on the hearts of men. They are Christians who are thus taught of God to BELIEVE and OBEY. Those are Christian churches which are formed by a persuasion of the truth, and regulated by the precepts and examples contained in the New Testament.”

The intelligent reader can be at no loss, it is presumed, to perceive how very different is the spirit or strain of doctrine insisted on by the authors now quoted, from that which runs through the writings of Mr. Hill on the subject in question. The truth is, that the latter, notwithstanding his singular zeal about religion, and his incessant labours in preaching the Gospel, always manifested the most lamentable blindness respecting the nature of Christ's kingdom, and the peculiar line of conduct to which he calls all his subjects in order to manifest their allegiance to HIM, their rightful Sovereign, whose they are, and who purchased them by his blood. Mr. Hill was sufficiently acquainted with his Bible to know, that an awful apostacy from the faith and purity of the Christian profession, to take place in the latter days, or under the Gospel dispensation, was foretold in ancient prophecy, and that it came to pass accordingly, being consummated in the usurpations, idolatries, and abominations of the Church of Rome, and other established churches in communion with her. That he was perfectly aware of this, is manifest from various parts of his writings, and that the Church of England was "*particeps criminis*," one of the unchaste daughters of the "Babylonian Harlot" could scarcely be concealed from his view. The exposure which he has made of her filthiness, in his "Sale of Curates," the scandalous traffick which is continually taking place in her for the "loaves and fishes," and of which he seems to have been perfectly ashamed, affords ample proof of the truth of what has now been said. But how could he overlook the fact, that the corruption of Christianity commenced with a departure from the instituted order of the house of God, and that it ended in treading under foot the holy city during the long period of 1260 years? This was the period allotted in the mysterious counsels of heaven, for the *reign of Anti-christ*, the man of sin, the son of perdition; that "wicked one whom the Lord is now consuming with the spirit of his mouth, and will utterly destroy with the brightness of his coming." The mystery of iniquity began to work even in

the Apostles' days, and it increased by little and little, "evil men and seducers waxing worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived." The simple doctrines of the Gospel were at an early period corrupted and darkened by vain philosophy, mysticism, and error. The primitive church-government became exchanged for the lordly dominion of diocesan and metropolitan bishops. The ordinances of Gospel-worship were perverted from their original intention, and mingled with abundance of superstition and human invention, until the profession of Christianity became so corrupt, in the days of Constantine the Great, A. D. 325, that it was made the religion of the Roman Empire, and formed an unnatural alliance with the State. Until that time the religion of Christ had never known what it was to have a legal establishment in the world; on the contrary, it was every where, and almost incessantly the object of persecution. It was propagated by means of the preaching of the Gospel, and the disciples were collected into churches, to observe the ordinances of public worship which the apostles had instituted in Christ's name. The only scriptural office-bearers were Elders and Deacons, and these were the servants of the churches; the former, by office, to labour in the ministry of the word, maintain rule and order, and preside in all the affairs of discipline; the latter to attend to the secular affairs of each society, serve tables, or administer the church's bounty. And so far were these offices then from being objects of competition, as ministering to worldly ambition, that the individuals filling them were always placed in the foremost rank of sufferers from their merciless persecutors. But let us hear the learned Mosheim's account of the primitive churches and their bishops or presbyters.

"Let none confound the bishops [overseers, elders, or presbyters, for they are all one in reality] of this primitive or golden period of the church, says he, with those of whom we read in the following ages. For though they were both designated by the same name, yet they differed exceedingly in many respects. A bishop, during the first and second

centuries, was a person who had the care of one Christian assembly, which at that time, was, generally speaking, small enough to be contained in a private house. In this assembly he acted not so much with the authority of a master, as with the zeal and diligence of a faithful servant. The churches, also, in those early times, were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each of them governed by its own rulers, and its own laws [rather the laws of Christ, to whom alone they owed subjection]. Nothing is more evident than the perfect equality that reigned among the primitive churches; nor does there ever appear, in the first century, the smallest trace of that association of provincial churches from which councils and metropolitans derive their origin."

So far Dr. Mosheim: to which I add, that in the beginning of the fourth century, and when, under the auspices of Constantine, Christianity became the handmaid of the State, the scene changed—outward persecution ceased—the clergy were no longer called to suffer the hatred of the world, but, on the contrary, those who ought to have been the servants of the church for Jesus sake, began to be its lords and masters, in direct opposition to the Saviour's own command, and the example of his holy apostles. Christianity, having thus become "part and parcel of the law of the land," must now change her attire, in order that she may with dignity fill the throne of her discarded rival—Paganism. The clergy must raise their heads, extend their views, and become "lords over God's heritage." The simple institutions of the Gospel are found altogether unsuitable to this new order of things. Instead of meeting in a school, or upper room, or private house, magnificent temples must be built, and a hierarchy of ecclesiastics, descending from metropolitans, archbishops, and bishops, through the various gradations of ecclesiastical dignity down to presbyters and deacons, must be appointed to officiate at their altars. A spirit of innovation now rages of course—superstition opens all her paltry treasures—ignorance erects her leaden throne—the doctrines of the Gospel are more and

more corrupted in order to render them palatable to worldly minds, and its institutions mutilated—offices hitherto unknown are invented, and filled by a race of ecclesiastics under names and characters as foreign to Christian institution as that of a magician or a soothsayer; and to all this they are pleased to give the name of Christianity*! And now all that refuse submission to this “mystery of iniquity,” all that refuse to worship the beast or his image, the mystical virgins of the apocalypse, who are said to “keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus,” are treated as “the filth of the world and off-scouring of all things.” These were the *sectarians* and *bigots* of former ages, whose history may be traced from the days of Cyprian to those of Rowland Hill; but it is written in blood! They have ever been the objects of scorn, contempt, persecution, and malignity on account of their “narrow-mindedness” and their tenacious adherence to positive law and apostolic precedent. But they have been supported under the load of obloquy heaped upon them by the friends of catholic charity, in the testimony of a good conscience, a conviction of the rectitude of their conduct, the example of the noble army of martyrs, “who loved not their lives unto the death,” and the standing maxim of the kingdom of heaven, “we ought to obey God rather than man.”

Should any persons be of opinion that I have dwelt too largely on this particular topic, my apology is, that no individual of the age has done so much to inculcate latitudinarian sentiments on the topics of Christian discipline and church order, as the subject of this Memoir. Both in his conduct and his writings he laboured incessantly to remove the ancient land-marks of the kingdom of heaven, denying the existence of any statute law, any prescribed formula, or precedent in the example of the first churches that was of binding obligation on those of succeeding generations, and to the utmost of his

* See Ecclesiastical History, in a Course of Lectures by the Author of this Memoir, Vol. I., Lect. xx.

power throwing every thing loose that pertained to the order of the house of God. Against this part of Mr. Hill's conduct I feel myself imperiously called upon to bear a pointed testimony because of its pernicious influence. I am fully persuaded that we have in the New Testament the will of our ascended Sovereign clearly revealed, respecting the constitution, order, worship, and discipline of his churches, and that the whole difficulty which is complained of by Mr. Hill and others, of ascertaining that rule, is to be resolved into the darkness of the human mind, arising from prejudice and error, and a disinclination to sacrifice these to the wisdom of God. Truly, it was not without reason an apostle has said, "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise that they are vain." And it would not be easy to adduce an instance in which this will be found to hold good to a greater extent than in their attempting to improve upon the instituted order of Christ's house. But the reason of all such attempts is sufficiently manifest. Wherever the teachers of religion have thought proper to depart from the example of the primitive churches, it has been to gratify some principle in depraved human nature which ought to have been mortified; either the pride, avarice, and ambition of the clergy, or the self-indulgence and worldly-mindedness of the people. "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means, and the people love to have it so."

As to the singular economy of ecclesiastical affairs at Surrey Chapel, it would be difficult to apply a more appropriate epithet to it than that which Bishop Horsley made use of when he pronounced it "*Nondescript*." It was a constitution of things entirely of human devising; the Liturgical part borrowed, at second hand, from the Roman Missal; and it is not a little amusing to observe in his writings how full of admiration Mr. Hill was of it, holding up, as the paragon of excellence, what the late Mr. Hall of Leicester, who unhap-

pily for a short time was, in a measure, compelled to attend upon it, with all his candour and liberality became so weary of, from the formal repetitions and attendant circumstances, that he felt compelled to retire, saying that "if he had not been a dissenter before, he should be one now, and continue a dissenter to all eternity*." I have sometimes thought that Mr. Hill's scheme of things at Surrey Chapel might serve as an illustration of the meaning of the apostle Paul, in that somewhat difficult part of his writings, 1 Cor. iii. 11—15. In his preaching Mr. Hill uniformly held forth Jesus Christ as the alone and exclusive foundation of a sinner's hope towards God; but, alas, what "wood, hay, and stubble" did he build upon that foundation! Instead of bringing the disciples into that church-state, in which they might grow up from babes to young men, and from young men to fathers in Christ Jesus, which is one leading end of their union—directing them to "the work of faith and labour of love, and patience of hope, in our Lord Jesus Christ," he seemed to consider that every thing was accomplished when they were brought to confess their faith in the Son of God—their belief of the Gospel. But how different from this is the doctrine of the great prophet of the Christian church in the parable of the sower! Matt. xiii. We find him dividing the hearers of the word into four classes, of which only one brought fruit unto perfection, though two other classes bade equally fair at the outset: see ver. 18—23. The generality of professed Christians place their religion mostly in hearing sermons: they regularly attend the places of public worship, or perhaps run from place to place, not to worship, but gratify itching ears. In this they may possibly find some entertainment, or a transient gratification, but it is not that of the children of God, who desire the sincere milk of the word that they may grow thereby. The case of many modern professors resembles that of ancient Israel, of whom it is said, "They come unto thee

* See his Life by Morris, p. 195.

as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness: and lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not," Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32. The entire routine of things at Surrey Chapel was adapted to encourage and foster this mistaken view of matters. And in this way I consider Mr. Hill to have spent his years in building wood, hay, and stubble upon the foundation. Let us hope that though his work should be burned up, yet that he himself shall be saved, though it were "so as by fire."

A Christian church, formed upon the model of those mentioned in the New Testament, and to which the apostolic epistles were addressed, is the school of Christ, and intended by him to train up his disciples in meetness for the heavenly state. Every thing that takes place among them, whether prosperous or adverse, afflictive or joyous, draws their attention to the Bible, which thus serves "for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness." They are led to examine it upon all occasions, as the only authentic and infallible guide and directory in their affairs, and thus they learn more of its real import and meaning in one year than they would during a whole life in any other state.

Mr. Hill, in his last moments, was questioned by his chaplain, "*if he could see his personal interest in Christ?*" And what was his reply? "I can see more of the personal glory of Christ, than of my own interest in him." And, at another time, "God is letting me down gently into the grave. I feel myself poor, weak, and sinful, and desire to creep into heaven through some crevice in the door*." Now this is precisely what the New Testament would lead us to expect from a person in Mr. Hill's situation. For though a knowledge of

* Funeral Sermon by the Rev. George Weight, p. 35.

a personal interest in Christ be attainable by the children of God while in this world, it may be fairly and justly questioned whether any one ever did satisfactorily attain it, in the way Mr. Hill proceeded. As there is only one way of escape from the wrath to come, viz. by taking refuge, *by faith*, under the atoning blood of the Son of God; so there is only one revealed way of attaining the assurance of hope, or a knowledge of our personal interest in Christ, and that is by "giving diligence (in the work of faith and labour of love) to make our calling and election sure, by adding to our faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, and charity," 2 Pet. i. 10, 11. The apostle Paul had no hesitation in saying of the Thessalonians that he knew their election of God; but on what grounds did he deduce this favourable conclusion? Why because his Gospel did not come unto them in word only, but in power—in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance—they became followers of the Lord and of his apostles, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit," 1 Thess. i. 3—6. They were turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come," ver. 9, 10. The Gospel, as preached by the apostles, they received, not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, and it *wrought effectually* in them, believing it: for they "became followers of the churches of God which in Judea were in Christ Jesus, suffering the like things of their own countrymen, even as they did of the Jews," ch. ii. 13, 14. In this way the apostle proceeds throughout his first epistle, bearing the most honourable testimony to the effects which the Gospel had upon them, particularly in arming them with patience and fortitude to endure affliction, and causing them to increase and abound in love one towards another—the great proof of their having passed from death unto life, 1 John iii. 14.

But were the effects of the Gospel equally conspicuous in

the conduct of Mr. Hill? On the contrary, we see him all his life-time trammelled with Antichristian abominations—not following the Lord fully, so as to take part with Christ's despised disciples, but halting between two opinions, on matters of vital interest in Christianity—labouring to uphold a system against which the vials of the wrath of heaven are pouring out. In the very nature of things this must darken his evidences of personal interest in the Saviour. Christ, before he left the world, promised to bestow the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, upon his churches, to guide them into all truth, and to be with them for ever, supplying the want of his own personal presence—pouring into the hearts of his children the love of God—giving them sweet manifestations of his favour, and sealing them to the day of redemption. But these enjoyments, or spiritual refreshments, are only to be partaken of by the disciples, in the way of an unreserved obedience to the revealed will of God—for so runs the record. “He that hath my commandments and *keepeth them*, shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him; and we will come unto him and make our abode with him.” “If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.” “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” From these and many other portions of Scripture which I might quote, it is abundantly manifest that the assurance of hope, or a knowledge of personal interest in the Saviour, is only to be obtained in the way of *faith working by love*, and so influencing the believer to “observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded:” for “this is the love of God that we keep his commandments,” 1 John, v. 3. To suppose that any professor of the faith, though he might preach with the eloquence of an angel, who should presume to legislate for Christ in the affairs of his church or kingdom—treating with lightness and contempt any one of the primitive practices, and teaching others to do so, should at the same time be favoured with those divine manifestations which are peculiar to the assurance

of hope, is in effect to stultify a great part of divine revelation. Yet such is the mistaken notion of thousands of professors in our day.

Now, though it were ridiculous to think of moving the ear of Mr. Hill by any remarks of the kind now tendered, there are many of his professed admirers still living, into whose hands these printed pages may come, to whom they may nevertheless be serviceable, in leading them to look into the subject, and compare them with the word of God. A disposition to make light of the instituted order of Christ's house, is the besetting evil of the present day, and few men have contributed more to it than Rowland Hill. Even the dissenting churches are settled upon their lees—and too much disposed to follow the "traditions of the elders," instead of bringing their customs and usages to the light of the New Testament, and regulating their affairs by the Scripture standard.

What, by an incongruous association of terms, is called the religious or *Christian world*, has been wonderfully taken up of late years with flourishing accounts of the revivals of religion; and it is truly amusing to witness what an effect such reports are apt to have, even upon persons who, in the ordinary affairs of life, pay little or no regard to the bible. It matters not much how vague such representations may be, or how little entitled to credit; the bare idea of a "flourishing cause" will give an *impetus* to the sluggard and most worldly minded. Hence the promptness, so obvious in our day, to follow the multitude, and flock in crowds to listen to vociferation and rant. Our blessed Lord, who well knew what was in man, did not overlook this trait in depraved human nature, and frequently warned his disciples against it. "The kingdom of God," saith he, "cometh not with observation," that is, with outward show, and pomp, and bluster. "When they shall say, Lo here, and lo there—go not after them, nor follow them," Luke xvii. 20, 23. These wonderful revivals were *prudently* said to have commenced in America, and as they became in process of time, so popular a topic in our own

country, gracing many a speech from the platform, and infusing interest into many a sermon from the pulpit and the press, the writer of these remarks determined to satisfy himself as to what degree of credit such imposing statements were entitled, and fortunately an easy 'clue was afforded him of doing it. An intelligent friend, who had resided many years in New York, in the capacity of a merchant, and was a member of a Baptist church there, came over to England with his family, and settled in London some ten years since. His business made it necessary for him, however, to return to New York, three or four years ago, at which time he also visited all the principal towns in the United States. On his return to London I hastened to congratulate him on the "glorious events which were in progress" beyond the Atlantic! He looked somewhat surprised, and begged me to explain. Oh, said I, it is the wonderful revivals of religion that have taken place there. "Revivals of religion," said he, "'tis the first I have heard of it; I spent three months in America, and besides New York, I was at Philadelphia, Baltimore, Boston, and various other places, mingling among the religious people in each of them; but the subject of a revival of religion I do not remember to have been once mentioned. If there be any truth in the report, the thing must have been confined to the *back settlements*, which I did not visit!!

I am aware that since that time, a vigorous effort has been made by ministers and others, in different parts of the United States, to create an artificial excitement by resorting to means somewhat similar to those that were common among the Methodists in this country some twenty or thirty years ago, and more recently among the Ranters and Revivalists; but I suspect the whole has been a mere "flash-in-the-pan!" A smoke was raised, and our dissenting ministers in England endeavoured to fan it into a flame, but I apprehend the effort has proved abortive. That the Lord has his people in the vast Western Continent, and that they are abundant in number, is a pleasing reflection; but amidst all their zeal for religion

and display of large congregations and churches, can there be a more striking and heart-rending proof of the little progress which *Christ's kingdom* has yet made among them, than arises from the fact, that, to this day, *the white population positively refuse to communicate at the Lord's table with their sable brethren!* This appalling fact is but little known in England, where it is to be hoped there are not many of the dissenting churches that would countenance it*. But what estimate can we form of the state of religion in a country where the very same distinctions are kept up in the kingdom of Christ, which obtain in the kingdoms of this world? Oh, let us not be imposed upon by specious and high-sounding reports of American revivals, while such a *Brahminical caste* is suffered to exist among the churches. The first religious intelligence from that quarter, that can be worthy of our regard, must be, that this odious distinction no longer exists. Col. iii. 11.

Before we take a final leave of these revivals of religion, I crave permission to add, that it was with inexpressible satisfaction I perused at that time, a Sermon which was preached at Camberwell, on Lord's-day, January the 4th, 1829, by the late judicious WILLIAM ORME, expressly on this subject. The sermon was reported in the "World" newspaper of Wednesday, January 21st, following, and afterwards reprinted in a separate form. The preacher took for his text, Acts ii. 42—47, "Then they that gladly received the word, were baptized, and the same day there were added unto them about

* A few years ago, a very respectable dissenting minister, who now resides in a large manufacturing town in one of our midland counties, rendered almost enthusiastic by the monthly reports of American revivals, had nearly made up his mind to remove his family across the Atlantic. Providentially, the fact above-mentioned was communicated to him, and it operated on him like an electric shock. "What," said he, "the brethren in Christ refusing to commemorate his dying love at the same table, merely on account of a difference of complexion!" And from that moment he abandoned all thoughts of going to America.

three thousand souls: and they continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and in prayers, &c."

Having glanced at the then recent reports from America, and expressed his best wishes that they might prove well founded, the preacher brought the subject home to the consideration of his hearers or readers, and pointed out to them the proper improvement they should make of it, at the commencement of a new year. "A revival of religion," says he, "supposes either that religion has fallen into decay, or that it has not reached that vigour and elevation to which it might be expected to arrive. In both senses it is a phrase of a comparative nature. It also implies that there is some standard or period with which we are disposed to compare "the present line of things." And therefore, before we can speak intelligibly on the subject, we must have a correct idea of the standard by which the nature and degree of religious feeling and attainment should be tried. Without this, every thing must be vague and indefinite. Instruction will be unsatisfactory, reproof and admonition administered at random, and exhortation and excitement, however well intended, either miss their aim, or produce only general impressions, indefinite in their nature, and temporary in their duration. It is my conviction that the state of religion in the mass of its professors requires to be revived and re-invigorated, brought back to the primitive standard, and increased to the apostolic fervour.

"My idea of the balance in which we ought to weigh ourselves," says Mr. Orme, "will at once be ascertained from the passage chosen as the subject of this discourse. It contains the first account written by the pen of inspiration, of the effects of the gospel on the disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ, immediately after the dispensation of the Spirit, which followed the ascension of our Lord. What the gospel was at the beginning, that it is now, and evermore shall be, world without end. Its effects on the men who first received it, were most powerful and salutary; their enjoyments appeared in their character,

and their characters re-acted on their enjoyments. As they received, they lived; their lives evinced the reality and power of their principles; and as their principles were displayed and acted upon, the word of the Lord had free course and was glorified.

“ I have chosen this passage,” says the preacher, “ because it contains one of the most beautiful pictures of religion which is any where presented in the word of God. It places before us a company of sinful mortals hearing the doctrine of salvation from the lips of the apostles, and gladly receiving that doctrine as a message of mercy and eternal life; uniting together, on their reception of this message, to walk in obedience to the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, at once for their own benefit, and for the profit of many that they might be saved; discovering a spirit of the most delightful union and fellowship with each other, and displaying an almost boundless generosity; experiencing a gladness of soul, a hilarity of mind springing from the conscious favour of God, and the hope of his glory, in combination with a highly devoted devotion which evinced the sanctity of their joy, and was powerfully calculated to recommend their faith to others. Oh! it was such a scene

“ As earth saw never,
Such as heaven stooped down to see.”

The preacher then proceeds to comment on the more prominent features which characterized the religious profession of the primitive Christians—*its heavenly nature*; they knew nothing of Christianity but as it was taught them from above; the apostles announced to them heaven’s mercy and heaven’s deliverance from impending misery; and this led 3000 “gladly to receive the word of the apostles.” It came not to them through any polluted channel of conveyance: the gospel which they heard, sounded in their ears as the voice of God: its call was the invitation of an unveiled heaven full of attraction and full of glory. Its command was the authoritative mandate of

HIM whose word is his law, unbroken and unsoftened by the instrument of its communication; it told upon their hopes like the music of heaven, and upon their fears like the shrieks of the damned. To them the gospel came not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and much assurance. When they first heard it, they were pricked in their hearts; when they believed it, they were filled with joy, and their joy no man could take away from them.

It is easy to perceive, says Mr. Orme, that there is a vast difference between receiving religion in this manner and experiencing its heavenly power, unclogged and unaided by any earthly circumstances, and taking it up as a profession, or embracing it as a system of opinions. The primitive Christians had nothing to recommend Christianity to them but its own intrinsic suitableness and glory. They were not prepared for its reception either by Judaism or Gentilism, or the state of things existing around them. All their hereditary prejudices, their established habits, their prevailing opinions, were unfavourable to its reception and its influence. When it operated upon Jews, it delivered them from their vain conversation received by tradition from their fathers; and when it operated on Gentiles, it turned them from dumb idols to serve the living and the true God. To accomplish such a change, the power of Omnipotence was required; and when that was once felt, nothing could prevent its full effect. In whatever point of view they contemplated this new economy, divinity was stamped upon it. The doctrines of the gospel were divine, and therefore worthy of implicit belief. Its laws were divine, and consequently entitled to unreserved obedience. Its promises were divine, and therefore worthy of unqualified confidence. Its institutions were divine, and therefore entitled to the highest respect. They had one Saviour, and one Master—but he was Jesus—God over all, and blessed for evermore, consequently worthy of their supreme and undivided gratitude and homage.

After some further pertinent observations, the preacher

proceeds to notice a second feature in the religious profession of these primitive disciples; viz. "The conscientious observance of the public ordinances appointed by the Lord for the benefit of his church"—they continued steadfastly in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and "in breaking of bread and in prayers." And here I particularly request the reader's attention to the following remarks, because they are so completely subversive of the principle of Mr. Hill, which I formerly quoted, namely, that the wisdom of God "determined nothing precisely" regarding the order of public worship to be observed in the churches of Christ—that we are left to "general rules" to direct us as circumstances might demand; in short, "that there is no law, consequently no transgression." Now hear Mr. Orme on this subject.

"I agree with those who consider this passage as affording a description of the stated public ordinances observed by the first Christian church, and *in which we have a pattern which ought to be imitated by all churches*. The apostle's doctrine is the public teaching of the church, then of course conducted by the apostles of Christ. The fellowship, as distinguished from the other things, is the contribution for the poor, which then constituted a regular part of the engagement (or exercises) of the first day of the week. The breaking of bread is the ordinance of the *Lord's Supper, which beyond all controversy was then regularly observed every Lord's day*; thus conjoining together the ordinances commemorative of the death and resurrection of the Saviour. The prayers are the other devotional parts of public worship. These sacred institutions belong to the very substance of our religion, and the proper and conscientious observance of them enters deeply into the enjoyment and practice of Christianity. They constitute the aliment of the Christian life, and on their being properly administered and properly used, depend, under the blessing of God, the healthy state of religion in the soul. Their great objects are, to supply an increase of knowledge to the disciples, on all the points of doctrine, practice, and comfort which their

diversified circumstances require. To keep up by public association and animated address, that excitement and fervour which are in danger of being lost in the bustle and business of the world. To counteract that tendency to selfishness, worldly-mindedness, and unconcern about the good of others which are so natural to fallen creatures even in a redeemed state. To afford opportunity for the exercise of the various gifts and talents bestowed upon the members of the church by its Great Head, by the due employment of which the strong help the weak, the rich assist the poor, the enlightened instruct the ignorant; so that they who have much have nothing over, and they who have little experience no lack.

“The suitableness of this wise and gracious arrangement is such, that Christianity has been invariably found to flourish as these ordinances have been purely dispensed, and as invariably to decline where they have been corrupted or neglected. The believers at Jerusalem ‘continued steadfastly’ in these ordinances; that is, they observed them in the most conscientious and persevering manner. It did not occur to them that they were at liberty to observe or neglect them, as their humour, or caprice, or convenience might dictate. They did not suppose for a moment that they were at liberty to neglect them under any circumstances, except those of the most obvious necessity, or that they had any right to endeavour to substitute something else in their place. Nor did they conceive that they were entitled to observe some and neglect others at their own pleasure. For instance, that they might go on receiving the instructions of the Christian ministry, and join in the public worship, but regularly turn their back on the commemorative Supper of their Lord. So monstrous a disjunction, however common in modern times, never entered into the imagination of a primitive believer. He knew and felt it to be his duty and his privilege to observe all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless, or as he had received them from Christ.”

These sentiments are so entirely in unison with my own

upon this important subject, and I may add so wholly at variance with those of Messrs. Hill, Jay, and the generality of the dissenting ministers of the present day, that I have great pleasure in introducing them to the readers' notice in this place. Would that it were compatible with my limits to insert the whole sermon; there is no production of Mr. Orme's pen more deserving of being handed down to posterity, as a vindication of the scriptural order of the house of God, in opposition to the traditions and inventions of men. But I must refrain, and content myself with a meagre abridgment.

Commenting on the steadfastness, regularity, and perseverance with which the first Christians observed the ordinances of the Lord's house, he adds, "How different is all this, my brethren, from the desultory, irregular, capricious conduct of many who now say, 'Lord, Lord,' but who in these respects do not the things which he commands. Of the principles of Christian fellowship, they seem to be as ignorant as if the subject had never been mentioned in the New Testament. Their conduct in observing the ordinances of Christ seems to be regulated by no fixed or scriptural principle. What they should observe, they can scarcely describe. How they should observe what they admit to be duty, they can as little tell; and as to regularity and perseverance, it would seem as if conscience had nothing to do with the matter. The most trifling occurrence is sufficient to disconcert their attendance with the people of God, and the enjoyment of the most important privileges which belong to our present state. The attractions of an ephemeral popularity; the solicitations or intrusions of friendship; the trifling inconveniences of local circumstances; the changes of the weather, a hundred such things, of which one feels ashamed to speak; reproaching as they do, the effeminacy of the age, or its want of principle; all shew that the high standard of primitive piety is little understood, and fully account for the selfishness and imbecility which the Christian character too frequently presents."

Referring to "the spirit of union and love which animated

them in all their conduct to each other," and which is intimated in the words, "the multitude who believed were of one heart and one soul," Mr. Orme says, "this hallowed communion of hearts and souls, appeared in the preference which they discovered for each other's society, to that of all around them. Their friends and companions were not the men of the world, the fascinations of whose manners and talents operated upon them as a charm. They were not their friends and relatives destitute of the knowledge and power of religion. They were not exclusively the men of their own rank and class in society among Christians. *There were no castes among the early believers*; no impassable lines of demarcation separating the grades into which they were divided: there was then no religious aristocracy distinct from the general community of the faithful: the body was one, and the members of it, however many, all felt that they belonged to each other; there was no schism in it, for all the members cared for one another. This delightful union appeared in acting rather than in speaking; in taking part with each other when called to suffer in a common cause. The vivid perceptions which they had of the infinite importance of that salvation of which they were common partakers, naturally led them to regard each other with feelings of the most peculiar and powerful kind. They loved each other for the truth's sake, which dwelt in them, and which they trusted would abide in them for ever. In the display which that truth furnished of the matchless love of God to guilty men, they found a reason for loving those, thus loved of God, more powerfully influential than all the considerations which could excite feeling towards the rest of their fellow-creatures. Hence they reasoned as well as felt, 'If God so loved us, we ought to love one another.' That love, they perceived, regarded not the fictitious distinctions of society, the claims of birth, or talents, of opulence or rank; it regarded men simply as guilty and wretched. The privileges which it provided and the glory which it promised, they saw clearly, belonged to all the partakers of the faith of Jesus, a

would be in proportion to the power and influence of that faith in whomsoever it was found. They understood that the world would shortly pass away, and the glory of it, and that they alone who did the will of God should endure for ever; that their companions and associates through eternity should not be those most distinguished by their powerful and brilliant talents, by their elevated rank, or by any other circumstances of an earthly nature, which now recommend men to each other; but their fellow disciples, their friends and brethren in Christ. They anticipated the period when the closest and most powerful of mere natural ties should be for ever broken; when the relationships of kindred and consanguinity should be dissolved, never again to be restored; when all that constitutes the present social compact should be destroyed among those earthly elements incapable of forming the combinations of the kingdom of heaven: and that then the fathers, and mothers, and brethren, and sisters in the gospel, should enjoy together the high rewards of the life everlasting. These lofty expectations

‘ Were far superior to poor hopes
From ought beneath the skies. And as they saw
Worth in each other, and the grace of Christ
Brightening the soul, they did not still disdain
The thought of meeting them among blest myriads,
With some peculiar and immortal friendship.’

“ A fourth marked feature of the primitive Christians was their abundant liberality: they sold their possessions and goods, and parted them as every man had need. That the wants of the poor were adequately supplied, is evident on the face of the narrative, for there were none among them that lacked, and they had, as it were, all things common. This amazing liberality appears to have been exercised principally with a view to the sacred cause of the Redeemer. Many of those who wished to consecrate themselves to his service, parted with their houses and lands, and laid the proceeds at the feet of the apostles, that they might thus without the

entanglement of the affairs of this life, more effectually promote the interests of the kingdom of heaven. The causes of this high generosity are to be sought—not in the extraordinary wealth of the people, for it was manifest, in many cases, in the depth of poverty. They are not to be found in the authoritative exactions of the apostles; for they left it in a great degree to men to act voluntarily in this matter; referring the measure or degree of their benevolence to their own consciences, and the decision of another day. They are not to be found in the mere operation of any temporary circumstances which have passed away, never to return; far less are they to be sought or found in the spirit of frenzied excitement, in a fanaticism for which no adequate or satisfactory reasons can be assigned. The whole matter admits of an easy explanation, which leaves us not to wonder at the liberality of early times, but at the penuriousness of our own. The first disciples regarded themselves as bought with the precious blood of Christ, to be his servants and friends for ever. They therefore conceived that they were not their own, but the Lord's property. From him they had received all they possessed, as its original owner and giver: a second time it had been made his, by the most costly purchase. To use it therefore for him, and not for themselves alone, they considered they were bound in justice and in gratitude. The most profitable way in which they could invest this world's good, they were convinced, was by embarking it in the Saviour's cause, and devoting it to the advancement of the Saviour's glory. In this way they knew what was as two should be made five, and what was as five should become ten. That in the day when the stewardship must be surrendered, the consolation would not be found in reflecting on the amount that had been spent in adorning the body, in gratifying the lusts of the flesh, and the pride of life; in having lived in splendour, and died in glory; but in having ministered to the wants of the saints, relieved the prisoner, cherished the orphan and the widow; and abounded in the works of faith and labours of love which recommended the

Gospel, and told the preciousness of a Saviour's love to many. They were convinced that all on earth was unsatisfactory and perishing ; that in heaven alone was the better and enduring substance to be found. The best use, therefore, which they could make of the unrighteous mammon was by employing it to multiply the friends of Christ, who, when they failed, would receive them into everlasting habitations."

Again: "A fifth feature of primitive Christianity is 'the joy with which it inspired all who came under its influence.' It is only necessary to read the New Testament with attention, to perceive that this was an uniform effect of the gospel. Those who proclaimed it called it glad tidings ; those who received it felt it to be so. When 'Philip went down to Samaria and preached Christ in it, there was great joy in that city.' When he preached to a solitary eunuch in the desert, he sent him on 'his way rejoicing.' The disciples who believed in Antioch were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. And the despairing jailer no sooner received the word of God than he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house. Joy was not only the invariable effect of the reception of the gospel, but their joy was of a kind and degree corresponding with the nature of the truth received, and the hope entertained: it was altogether spiritual and heavenly in its nature ; hence it is called, 'joy in the Holy Spirit'—'joy in the Lord'—'joy in believing, in rejoicing in hope ; joy unspeakable and full of glory.' It was not a sudden glow of feeling, a transient emotion, partaking rather of the nature of passion than of sentiment. It was abiding and diffusive in its influence ; the effect of a powerful and permanent cause ; it was as lasting as it was exquisite, and distinguished from all terrestrial excitement. It entered into every thing in which the believers engaged ; the most common concerns of life, as well as the acts of religious worship. They not only praised God, but 'did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.' The gospel, as preached by the apostles, and received by those that rejoiced in it, was not a system of fine notions, which

pleased the intellect, but could not relieve the labouring heart of man, or alter, by its powerful operation, his wretched being. It commended itself to him as the medicine of his (corrupt and depraved) nature, by subduing the very seed of woe within him, and controlling the otherwise uncontrollable power of outward events upon him."

After noticing "the spirituality and devotion of the disciples," who were daily with one accord in the temple, praising God, Mr. Orme thus winds up this admirable sermon. "The circumstances of the first Christians brought God continually before them, and rendered his presence indispensable to the peace and tranquillity of their minds. Nothing but a high spirituality could have sustained them under the privations and sufferings they had to endure. Their whole souls were thrown into their profession of Christianity, and religion became at once the study and business of their lives. They prayed without ceasing. In every thing they gave thanks. Whether they ate or drank, or whatsoever they did, they did all to the glory of God. Thus every occupation and pursuit was sanctified, and a sacred consistency of character uniformly maintained. They were temples of the Holy Spirit, who dwelt in them. They were living sacrifices holy and acceptable to God. All this is not only in accordance with the precepts of the gospel and consistent with its spirit, but the precise state of mind and character which we might expect to arise from its principles. Nothing less than this is consistent and full toned Christianity. Where a different state of spiritual religion obtains, something must be wanting or discordant. The consideration of the state of things which has now been feebly described, and the comparison of the early and latter condition of true religion in the world, must produce the most humbling views of ourselves, our attainments, and our enjoyments. In impressive views of the truth, in devoted attention to the ordinances of the kingdom of God, in ardent attachment to each other in the exercises of generosity and benevolence, in heavenly joy, and in pure and elevated devotion,

the generality of the Christians of modern times fall greatly below the characters of the primitive believers, and beneath what might be expected from the distinguishing privileges which they enjoy. Yet it is to this direction we ought to endeavour to bring our sentiments, our feelings, and our conduct. Nothing but a return to first principles and practices, will ever produce those glorious results which attached to the profession of the gospel at the beginning. *Every revival of religion must be tried by this standard, and weighed in these scales in its nature and effects. As it approaches to, or diverges from what the apostles enjoined, and the consequences of their ministry illustrate, it demands our approbation or calls for our opposition.*" So far Mr. Orme.

On this I take leave to remark, that no language could more fully express my own sentiments on the subject than that which I have now laid before the reader. The *model* of a Christian church, in its constitution, order, discipline, and worship, first exhibited in the church of Jerusalem, was *divine*; and it forms the standard, pattern, and example which the churches of Christ in every age and nation are called to imitate. All deviations from it are to be put down to the score of the corruptions of Christianity. Those frightful corruptions, which, by a gradual process of accumulation, terminated in "BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH," took their rise in the wisdom of men attempting to improve upon this divine model, by little and little; in all which they manifested nothing but conceited ignorance and the most egregious folly! Truly has Mr. Orme remarked that the church at Jerusalem furnishes the standard by which all our revivals in religion must be tried; the value of every attempt at reformation must be estimated by its approximation to this standard. The Church of England takes credit to herself for being the *reformed church*: but try her pretensions by this standard, and Mr. Hill has already given us the result in his "Sale of Curates!" The system of things pursued at Surrey Chapel, and of which Mr. Hill was

so wonderfully enamoured, professed to be a correction of the corruptions of the Church of England; but let that system be tried by the primitive Church of Jerusalem, as illustrated in Mr. Orme's sermon, and you are compelled to write upon it "Ichabod." It is a mere scheme of human device, the product of the wisdom of Rowland Hill, but on which the word of God stamps the epithet of folly. How impotent then are all his charges of heresy, schism, bigotry, and sectarianism brought against those persons who would reduce the profession of Christianity to the Scripture standard!

SECTION XII.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS, ANECDOTES, AND POSTHUMOUS SERMONS.

It has happened to few individuals in any age or country, whatever their rank or station in life may have been, to furnish their contemporaries with a richer fund of anecdote than the subject of this memoir. Of this, something is to be attributed to his own personal singularities, which rendered him a common topic of conversation, particularly in the religious circles of the metropolis, but much more to his own fondness for anecdote, and his constant practice of introducing them into his sermons by way of illustration or embellishment. His natural turn for facetiousness incessantly prompted him to indulge in this, while, unfortunately, the habit grew upon him to such an extent that it is to be feared it became a *succedaneum* for what nothing can excuse in a minister of the word, namely, preparation for the pulpit. The writer of these remarks is well acquainted with an individual who has made it his practice, for twenty years or more, to collect and commit to writing whatever came in his way, in the shape of anecdote, pertaining to Mr. Hill, and should he carry his intention into

execution of submitting the budget to the public, through the medium of the press, we shall have a volume far surpassing in size the table-talk of Luther or of Selden! In the mean time, it is to be hoped, that some pains will be taken to ascertain what part is true and what false—to discriminate between the genuine and the apocryphal—which is the more needful, inasmuch as Mr. Jay assures us that “a thousand things of this kind, which have been reported of Mr. Hill, are perfectly false.” There is reason to believe that many of the anecdotes which he introduced into his sermons of what had befallen others, were, through sheer heedlessness and inadvertency on the part of his hearers, placed to his own account. Thus, for instance, the well-known and often-repeated story of his having been robbed by a foot-pad, whom he next day took into his service, and who after living with him twenty years, died under his roof, had no foundation in truth as applied to Mr. Hill—the thing happened to Dr. Fothergill, and was merely related by Mr. Hill, in a funeral sermon which he preached on occasion of the death of one of the poor of his flock. The same remark will apply to what has found its way into the “Georgian Era,” and other biographies of him, respecting his visiting a poor emaciated creature, stretched on a miserable bed in a garret, and without a shirt, when he immediately stripped and forced his own upon the reluctant invalid—this also wants truth for its basis. A third instance of a kindred cast is, that “one night after he had been in bed for some hours, he felt an impulse to get up and take a walk. Wandering into the Strand, (which, by the bye, was entirely out of his beat) he was there accosted by an unfortunate woman, with whom he entered into conversation; and finding her, as he thought, weary of her evil course of life, and desirous of turning from it, he took her to his house, and prevailed upon Mrs. Hill to receive her as a domestic.” This was first told of the celebrated Edmund Burke, and subsequently transferred to Mr. Hill without any authority!

I have already intimated my scepticism respecting his

making Mrs. Hill the butt of his ridicule before the congregation in Surrey Chapel, of which there are several instances recorded in the "Georgian Era:" these ought not to be believed. In the same respectable publication, we are told that "instead of a scriptural text, he has been known to select, as the subject of his discourse, a newspaper paragraph: and that he once commenced a sermon by shouting, 'Matches! Matches! Matches! You wonder,' he continued, in his usual tone, 'at my text; but this morning, while I was engaged in my study, the devil whispered me, Ah, Rowland, your zeal is indeed noble; and how indefatigably you labour for the salvation of souls! At that very moment a man passed under my window, crying "Matches!" very lustily, and conscience said to me, Rowland, Rowland! you never laboured to save souls with half the zeal this man does to sell matches!'"

Now, how much of this is true, it is difficult to ascertain. In all probability, if traced to its origin, it would be found to resemble the story of "the three black crows." At any rate, if correctly reported, the thing is to be condemned as unworthy of a Christian minister; and though it might excite the mirth of fools and add to the preacher's popularity among that class of hearers, both reason and revelation revolt against such pitiful shifts to draw attention. "The bad jokes and undignified observations which he is said to have uttered from the pulpit," says one of his biographers, "are discreditable to his judgment, as his strenuous labours for the relief of distress are honourable to his heart." Even Mr. Jay admits that "his excellent friend had in his composition a considerable portion of eccentricity. This, however, he tells us *never* appeared in the subject matter of his preaching; but only occasionally in the manner. Into this he was betrayed, not only by the singularity of his genius, but his wish to attract and strike especially the lower orders, whom he truly thought were too much overlooked by many modern preachers, both in the Establishment and among Dissenters. He certainly did not forget the sanction of Horace with regard to the

facetious*. And here, I need not be afraid to say, our honoured friend occasionally erred; and I have sometimes known him acknowledge it afterwards. But this exceedingly decreased with growing years and experience†.”

Admitting this to be true, it cannot be denied that it was a foible which clung to him to the end of his days, and of which the sermons that form a part of this volume exhibit proof, if any were wanting. The writer of this memoir recollects hearing him preach an occasional sermon at Claremont Chapel, about two or three winters before his decease, in which, adverting to the Socinians, he thus sarcastically apostrophized—“They call themselves rational Christians! Rational Christians indeed! The Lord help them—they are anything but rational: they should be cut for the simples!” And this indecent sally was introduced “into the subject matter of his preaching”—into a disquisition on the doctrine of Christ crucified; the effect was, as might be expected, to produce a titter through the whole audience.

Mr. Jay has tendered a laboured apology for this part of his friend’s conduct, which I confess myself unable to comprehend the force of: it is as follows: “There was nothing he so much disliked as a tame smoothness of language that slid off from the mind and conscience of the hearer; or a mode of address, which if free from faults (a poor recommendation *alone*) was equally void of excellences. *His* aim, *his* endeavour, was to impress, to excite, to accomplish the grand design of preaching, to turn sinners from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. His expressions were always full of point, and sometimes tinged with quaintness: he employed the most colloquial phrases, and preferred, what his illustrious predecessor called ‘market language,’ and thus, though not exclusively, ‘the poor had the Gospel

* It is curious that in quoting the five words of the Roman poet, Mr. Jay should have fallen into two mistakes.

† Funeral Sermon, p. 26.

preached unto *them*'—and 'the common people heard him gladly.' And of whom was this originally said? The Lord pardon those who would not glory in such a commendation! They who sit still may see little trips in those who walk, and especially in those that run, from which they are free—not because they move better, but do not move at all. The tame-minded may carp at the efforts of genius, whose province it is to snatch many a beauty beyond the reach of art, while it sometimes fails in its ventures; and congratulate themselves that they are not chargeable with such failures; but the reason is because they are incapable of such flights," p. 29.

Now, if this is intended to apply to Mr. Hill, one naturally asks, "What are the flights to which he soared?—do they respect his language or his sentiments?" It cannot be the former, for this reason, that it has just before been confessed that his style was colloquial; he preferred the 'market language;' and the compliment must be equally misplaced if intended to apply to his theological opinions, for in this respect he scarcely ever advanced beyond the A B C. But the worst part of this apology consists in the attempt to identify Mr. Hill's manner of address with that of the Great Prophet of the Christian Church, whose object surely was to accomplish the grand design of preaching, but than which no two things in nature could be more dissimilar. In the latter there was no "peculiar vehemence or loudness in the voice," such as distinguished Mr. Hill's preaching. His manner corresponded with what was said of him in ancient prophecy, "He shall not strive nor cry; neither shall he lift up his voice in the street:" "Grace was poured into his lips," and though "he taught as one having authority and not as the scribes," he never employed "colloquial phrases," or "expressions tinged with quaintness," to give him popularity. That which drew the attention of the common people, and caused them to hear him gladly, was the heavenly strain of his doctrine—it was the language of divine compassion—of mercy to the miserable and self-condemned. Though delivered with a

mildness and gentleness which resembled the falling of the dew upon the tender herb, it made its way to the conscience and the heart, commending itself by its own intrinsic excellence; it was omnipotent to kill and to make alive, to wound and to heal! However praiseworthy Mr. Hill's aims and endeavours might be, his *method* of carrying them into effect was his own—the product of his own wisdom—and not counteranced by any thing in the example of Christ or his apostles. Mr. Jay, therefore, should not have attempted to confound the things that differ, or to sanction extravagance and rant by the holy example of the Redeemer.

The following anecdotes, however, appear to be well authenticated, and as they serve to illustrate Mr. Hill's character, they are subjoined for the gratification of such as have a peculiar fondness for the marvellous. They are extracted from Mr. Griffin's sermon, preached at Portsea, on occasion of Mr. Hill's death.

“When I was with him at Bristol Tabernacle, Mr. Hill related to me, in his pleasant manner, a fact which occurred in his youth. His father, Sir Rowland, was not pleased with what he considered the irregular conduct of his sons, in descending so low as to preach in the villages and fields. One fine summer evening our deceased friend was preaching by the side of his father's park, at Hawkstone, in Shropshire. His powerful voice, exerted in a zealous degree, was sufficiently strong for the sound, occasionally while he was preaching, to reach the ears of his father, then sitting in his drawing-room, confined by the gout. He sent a servant to Richard to require his presence; and, on his arrival, inquired whose voice it was that he heard. “It is Rowland, I suppose, Sir,” said he, “preaching to the people in the neighbourhood.” Go, and tell him to come to me immediately, was the command of the father. Richard obeyed, and going to Rowland, whispered to him that he must go directly to his father. Rowland said, What shall I do with the congregation? I cannot go, unless you come up and finish my discourse

Richard immediately began to preach, and Rowland proceeded to his father, who gave him a lecture for his irregular conduct. While receiving this lecture, Sir Rowland (the father) said to him, 'I hear some other person preaching now—who is that?' I suppose it is Richard, finishing my sermon, Sir, said Rowland. 'Go immediately, said his father, and tell him I command him to come at once to me, and do you come with him.' Rowland immediately obeyed; but when he came to Richard, the latter had finished his discourse and dismissed the people. They both went to their father, who severely reprimanded them for so degrading themselves. The brothers used some affectionate and respectful language to him, and employed some witticisms relating some risible anecdotes about the grateful expressions of the poor elderly women, which made the father, in spite of his anger and his gout, to smile—for the baronet was, of course, pleased that the people in the neighbourhood of his mansion should be kept in good humour. When his sons perceived that his anger was abated, they bowed and retired."

"About the time that Mr. Hill commenced out-door preaching, he visited one of our seaport towns, where he attempted to preach in the open air; but was so interrupted by noise and missiles, that it was impossible for a time to proceed. He was on horseback, and his footman with him. Instead of attempting to preach, he had recourse to an innocent stratagem. Addressing himself to the people, he said, 'My lads, I have no right over you. If you do not choose to hear me, I have no authority to force your attention; but I have travelled some miles for the sake of doing or receiving good. I have therefore a proposal to make to you. I always did admire British sailors. I see here some able-bodied seamen. Some of you no doubt have witnessed a great deal of service, and been in many a storm, and some in dangerous shipwrecks. Now, as I am very fond of hearing the adventures of seamen, my proposal is, that some of you,

and as many as you please in turn, shall stand up and tell us what you have seen and suffered, and what dangers you have escaped; and I will sit and hear you out upon this condition, that you agree to hear me afterwards. The proposal made many of them to laugh heartily, and they said one to another ‘Do you stand up and give us a lecture.’ One called upon a talkative sailor by name, ‘I say, Harry, do you give him a lecture,’ which produced a loud burst of laughter through the whole crowd; and Mr. Hill, to keep them in good humour, laughed with them. After waiting some time, Mr. Hill said, ‘Will none of you take my proposal?’ Finding them all silent, he thus accosted them: “I am a clergyman—I came not long since from the University of Cambridge. If you had heard me I should have told you nothing but what is in the Bible or Prayer-book. I will tell you what I intended to say if you had heard me quietly.” And so commencing with a declaration of the grace and compassion of the Saviour, he led them to the consideration of the dying malefactor, Luke xxiii. 39—43; and then to the character and circumstances of the prodigal son, and the compassion of his father. His description of what he *meant* to have said, was so interesting and affecting, that he rivetted their attention, and produced an evident change in their disposition towards him. While he was speaking, they drew gradually nearer, hanging, as is the practice of sailors when standing in a crowd, upon each other’s shoulders. In this position they listened, with almost death-like silence, till he had finished telling them what he should have said, if they had been willing to hear him. He then took off his hat, made them a bow, and thanked them for their civilities. Most of them took off their hats, and gave him three cheers. Several vociferated, ‘When will you come again, Sir?’ And one man, who seemed like the champion of the whole, approached Mr. Hill and said, ‘If you will come again, Sir, I say no one shall hurt a hair of your head, if I am on shore.’ Mr. Hill promised that he would visit them again as soon as other engagements would permit.”

The following, though not from the same source, is pretty much in the same style, and very likely to be true. "Being on one occasion engaged to preach in a town where violent opposition was expected, and where it was known that a celebrated pugilist was engaged to molest him, he nevertheless determined to preach, and therefore had recourse to a strata-gem, by which he disarmed his antagonist of his ferocity. Having ascended the pulpit, and satisfied himself from the appearance of the pugilist, that he was not inaccessible to flattery, he beckoned him to the pulpit-stairs, and told him that he was come to preach to those people, in the hope of doing them good—that some opposition had been threatened—that he had been told of his strength and skill in self-defence, and had full confidence in his powers:—that he therefore should place himself in his hands, rely on his protection, and begged the favour of his company to ride with him in his carriage after the service to dinner! The man felt the full force of the compliment; all his animosity was removed; he declared his readiness to defend the preacher in case of any insult being offered, and was as good as his word. He accompanied Mr. Hill to dinner, and ever after boasted of the honour which the latter had conferred upon him."

Evang. Biography, No. 1.

Mr. Hill is well known to have always entertained a great dislike to the character of the notorious William Huntington, and scrupulously avoided coming in contact with him. He detested his Antinomian principles, and gave them no quarter from either the pulpit or the press; while the *quondam* coal-heaver was particularly solicitous to cultivate a good understanding with the minister of Surrey Chapel. One day there came a knock at the house door of the latter, and on the servant opening it, a person said he came from Mr. Huntington with a letter for Mr. Hill. The servant proceeded to the parlour and mentioned the circumstance, on which the master, after a momentary pause, rose from his seat seized the tongs,

and began to rake the bottom of the grate for the purpose of making a proper place to deposit the letter. Having done this, he raised himself up, and looking towards the door, called out, "O, a letter from Mr. Huntington—well, come in." As soon as the person entered, Mr. Hill held out the tongs, and opening them, said, "there, put it there, put it there." Having got possession of the letter, he advanced towards the fire, at the same time thus addressing the messenger, "Now, mark what I am doing"—and instantly poked it into the place which he had prepared for it. "There," said he, "you may go now—tell him that's the answer!"

Mr. Hill was sometimes very felicitous in his manner of conveying reproof; and it was done in a way peculiar to himself. He was once present when arrangements were making for the organization of a public society, and the persons present were talking over the names of the individuals who should be proposed to a general meeting as fit members of the committee. Several names of persons who were engaged in trade having been mentioned, a gentleman interposed his advice by remarking that he thought some regard should be paid to the *respectability* of the society, and that "tag, rag, and bob-tail, should not compose the committee." Mr. Hill easily saw through the flimsy guise which in this instance ill concealed the pride of the human heart: he rose, therefore, and lifting up his hands as in the attitude of prayer, thus exclaimed, "God bless tag—God bless rag—God bless bob-tail." Having uttered these words he sat down—and the tradesmen were placed on the committee without another word in the way of opposition.

Being on a visit, accompanied by Mrs. Hill, at the house of a clerical friend in the country, as the three individuals were sitting together one evening, Mrs. Hill and "mine host" insensibly slid into a *tele-a-tete*, which turned upon a review of the characters of many of their personal friends and acquaintances, in which Mr. Hill took no part; but after a time found himself greatly annoyed by the conversation. To

put an end to it, he rose and rang the bell. When the servant appeared, he inquired if they had such a thing at hand as a hearth brush and dust pan. Being answered in the affirmative, he begged to be favoured with them for a few moments. On their being brought, he took them and began to sweep the carpet, saying that a prodigious quantity of dust and dirt had been scattered that evening by his two companions, and he was anxious to have it removed! The hint was taken, and the conversation turned upon other less annoying topics.

Mr. Hill was not always original in his eccentricities—he was at times but the humble imitator of George Whitefield, as the following instance will prove. The writer of this memoir remembers to have been told by the late Mr. M'Lean, of Edinburgh, that, being in London, some twenty or thirty years ago, he was prevailed upon to step into Surrey Chapel one evening, when Mr. Hill took for his text, Phil. iv. 13, “I can do all things”—here he paused for a moment, then added—“that I deny! I'll bet you half a crown, Paul, that it is not true”—on saying which he drew the piece of money from his pocket, and placed it upon the book before him. He then proceeded—“But stay, let us look a little further into the text;” he then read—“through Christ which strengtheneth me.” On this he gave a significant shake of the head, and added—“Ah, that alters the question—its a drawn bet;” and putting the money in his pocket again, he proceeded with his sermon. Now, the writer of this has a perfect recollection of being told, *fifty-five years ago* this very same anecdote, *verbatim*, of Mr. Whitefield, which is proof that Mr. Hill was in this instance only the copyist. And it is surely matter of deep regret that he should have considered the thing worth repeating. It perfectly shocked the sober-minded Scotch Baptist, to hear a professed Christian minister contradict the apostle, and he never mentioned the matter afterwards (which he often did) without adding, “I cannot reconcile such conduct with my views of what pertains to the fear and reverence that is due to the divine Majesty.”

Mr. Hill's witticisms, eccentricities, or *extravaganzas*, whatever name we may give them, were very revolting to the people of Scotland, of which many instances are upon record. During one of his tours into that country, the horse that drew his carriage fell lame, as has been formerly mentioned (p. 56,) and Mr. Hill greatly shocked a congregation of Antiburghers by publickly praying for the animal's recovery! It was in Scotland, too, that, preaching to an audience composed chiefly of weavers, he abruptly exclaimed, "O ye weavers, doesn't the shuttle go sweet when the love of God is burning in your hearts?"

The Scottish people complained that his preachings were too desultory and rambling: they wanted a little more *order*, and a hint having been given him to that effect, he mentioned it in one of his sermons, adding, that for his part he never yet had been fortunate enough to fall in with that same Mr. order; but if ever he did, "he would get upon his back and ride him to the d——!"

On another occasion, having been told that his hearers were fond of "heads and particulars," he received the hint with his usual good humour, and having ascended the pulpit in the evening, he began by remarking that as they did not like his morning sermon, he had taken care to have more arrangement in the one he was about to deliver; and that he should, therefore, have *four heads*—how many horns he had not yet determined on: but he should first of all go round about the text, he should secondly come up to the text; thirdly, he intended to go through the text; and lastly, he should altogether go away from the text! It is said the good man found himself most at home in the last head of discourse, which to say the least, is very credible.

So addicted was he to the humorous, that he could produce a laugh even in a funeral sermon. He had preached an affecting discourse at Tottenham Court Chapel, on occasion of the death of one of the managers, when he created a universal titter by the unseasonable remark, "that he was going into the country to try to overtake that *greyhound* Parsons"

—one of the Tabernacle preachers remarkable for his *rapid utterance*, not the celerity of his movements!

Reprobating the practice of postponing charitable donations to the hour of death, and thus making them less by the amount of the legacy duty, he exclaimed, with significant emphasis, “We’ll give the devil two and a half commission, if he’ll let us have the money now!”—a speech which it is not very easy to construe, without supposing him to intend that all who kept back their charitable donations to the period of their death, did so from covetous motives—and when we read that he himself left twenty thousand pounds to be distributed in legacies after his decease, if that were his meaning, it looks very much like writing his own condemnation.

But enough of anecdote; the sermons, prayers, and address, which follow this memoir, furnish us with something far better than facetious tales. They lead us to a charitable hope that, with all his “wood, hay, and stubble,” the “root of the matter” was found in him,” Job, xix. 28. Methinks we are warranted to indulge this favourable judgment on two grounds: first, that the eccentricities which marked his career, and which must be condemned by all sober-minded Christians, were a source of real grief to himself. In proof of this I refer the reader to an extract formerly given from the sermon which he preached at Bristol, on occasion of the death of his friend Mr. James Roquet, in which, apologizing for something of the same kind, he adds, “With the greatest delicacy I drop this hint, and am glad to cover it with the mantle of love, by *lamenting before you all the same weakness in myself*: a lively active disposition is apt to lead into this *mistake*: in many things we *offend* all: it is alone because the Lord’s compassions fail not, that the best of the sons of men are not consumed.” This is surely putting the matter upon its proper footing—what he condemned in himself, let us not foolishly apologize for, much less attempt to imitate. Constitutional infirmities are not easily got rid of; but it is a token for good that Mr. Hill bewailed them. Not long before his death

several of the London ministers had occasion to call upon him one Monday morning, desirous of consulting him on some matters of business, when they found him in a low and melancholy mood, and apparently quite indisposed. On inquiring further, he told them "he had been beating his head against the bed-posts all the night long, on account of the foolish things he had uttered in his sermon the preceding evening!" This shows that, however amusing to the generality of his hearers, they were a source of pungent and grievous reflection to himself, in his moments of abstraction and retirement.

The biographers of Mr. Hill have expatiated with fond enthusiasm on his great success in the conversion of sinners to God; awakening the careless and unconcerned to a due consideration of their immortal interests, and turning the disobedient to the wisdom of the just. Now, whatever may be the amount of this success, it becomes us to rejoice in it, and give God the glory. But is there no danger of our forming an erroneous estimate in this matter? There may be many awakenings of conscience, much terror and alarm, very hopeful appearances to the eye of sense, without one spark of true grace! To suppose that all who are the subjects of an awakened conscience are savingly converted to God, or shall ultimately enjoy his favour, and the rest and peace which the gospel confers on such as believe it, is to hold a sentiment which the Scriptures do not warrant. The difference betwixt a sinner whose conscience is let loose upon him and has driven him to a state of distraction, and that of another who casts the fear of God behind his back, is only that which exists between a felon newly arrested by the officers of justice, and another who is still roaming at large and indulging himself in the commission of crimes. But whoever imagined that the wretch who is apprehended is in a more hopeful state than his fellow? Yet this is somehow implied in the case under consideration. The powerful vociferation which distinguished the addresses of Messrs. Whitefield and Hill, accompanied with their searching appeals to the hearts of

their hearers, were well adapted to excite attention to what they said ; but our Lord's parable of the Sower, Matt. xiii. should lead us to think soberly on these matters, and not confound conviction with conversion. Elijah, of old, was very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, and no doubt very indignant with the prophets of Baal. On one occasion, while sheltering himself at Mount Horeb from the fury of Jezebel, he was summoned to present himself before the Lord upon the mount. "And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountain, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord : but the Lord was not in the wind ; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake ; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire ; and after the fire a *still small voice*, which the prophet recognized as that of the Lord of hosts ; and when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle."

The "still small voice" would appear to be more congenial to the nature of a kingdom which is spiritual and heavenly, which consists in "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit," than declamation and noise, though we must admit it to be praiseworthy and commendable in a minister of the gospel to be properly impressed with the importance of his office, and animated with zeal in discharging its functions. The weapons of his warfare are mighty to "cast down imaginations (presumptuous reasonings) and whatever exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ ;" but then they are mighty only *through God*. He gives to his word "the energy of a fire and a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces," Jer. xxiii. 29 ; but then it must be *his own word* that is spoken. "the prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream ; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word *faithfully* : What is the chaff to the wheat ? saith the Lord," ver. 28.

It would be ridiculous to compare the success of any preachers of the present day with that which attended the ministry of our Lord's apostles. But their preaching was of a

very simple kind. In bearing witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, they were necessarily led to speak of his personal glory as Immanuel, or God manifest in flesh—the ends of his incarnation and mission into this world—his vicarious sufferings—the value of his sacrifice, and its acceptableness to God—and the reward with which his obedience was crowned. This doctrine is wonderfully adapted to produce the most salutary and glorious effects upon the human heart. It opens up a source of conviction to men of all ranks and degrees, of every age and nation, civilized or savage, such as no other doctrine ever did; demonstrating that our state by nature must have been deplorable and wretched beyond the powers of conception, to render such a costly sacrifice as that of the heart's blood of God's own dear and well beloved Son necessary to extricate us from it. This is the view that they invariably presented to men of their lost condition; and from that consideration they commended the love of God to them in sending his Son to die for such guilty and hell-deserving rebels. By the force of this doctrine they made their way directly to the consciences and hearts of their hearers, and needed no adventitious aids either of oratory or rhetoric to give it effect. I throw out these hints without the smallest design or wish to detract from the merit of Mr. Hill or any other minister of the word; but solely to point those who are engaged in the good work, to the apostolic method of preaching, and urging them to copy the example of those inspired guides.

It were needless to attempt any laboured apology for the Sermons which follows this Memoir. When it is kept in mind that they were not preached with the slightest view to publication, and that they are the off-hand production of one who had attained the age of eighty and eight years, criticism must be instantly disarmed. If it be asked 'Why are they then issued to the public through the medium of the press?' The answer is, because they will furnish to posterity a more correct and faithful picture of what Rowland Hill was in his last days, than can be obtained from any verbal description or other source.

They form an imperishable monument of his attachment to the doctrines of divine grace. It will be seen from them that the subject with which he commenced his public ministry, namely CHRIST CRUCIFIED, continued his favourite theme to the last, and that he died in the faith of it. They furnish abundant proofs, too, of the preacher's earnest solicitude to benefit the souls of his hearers; of his willingness to spend and be spent for their sakes, and his pathetic complaints, and deep lamentation, that he was now incapacitated by age and infirmities from serving them better. He lays his whole heart and soul open to their inspection, and shows how tenderly he loved them in the bowels of Jesus Christ; declaring "he could almost wish to be ground young again, if he might but live to be more useful." Though the Sermons partake much of their author's usual desultoriness and want of connection, a pious mind, in going through them, will be struck with many a fine remark, and observations of stirring worth interspersed throughout, on which it will delight to pause, ponder, and reflect.

APPENDIX.

HAVING now gone over Mr. Hill's history, in a cursory manner, from his childhood to his grave—taken a review of his writings—and offered a few critical observations on what has passed under our notice, it only remains to lay before the reader a collection of the testimonies that have been published by others, his cotemporaries, according to the views they have respectively taken of his character; and which will form a suitable APPENDIX to this Memoir. I have invariably spoken of Mr. Hill according to the best judgment I could form of him; but all human judgments are fallible, and I never had the vanity to set up my own as the standard of rectitude. The privilege which I claim, of thinking for myself, I most willingly concede to others.

The following strictures on ROWLAND HILL, A.M., are extracted from "THE PULPIT, or a Biographical and Literary Account of eminent Popular Preachers, interspersed with occasional Clerical Criticism, by ONESIMUS, Vol. I. 8vo. 1809.

"Wisdom assures us there is a time for every thing. I wish, therefore, that it was my lot to describe the present preacher when he might have been supposed likely to listen to the suggestions of observation, and more able to endure the ordeal of criticism; when years had not impaired his strength, and when habit had not rendered his eccentricities, which he is said to feel, inveterate. I write this with truth. Disapproving though I do of Mr. Hill's clerical character, misplaced

as I think him to be in our scale of existence, still I am induced to respect his private conduct, and I can honour his diffusive benevolence.

“ It stands recorded of the memorable and Reverend John Ryland, among his sayings, that, ‘ the minister was nothing worth who could not make the Devil roar ;’ but it seems as if it had been reserved for Mr. Hill, exclusively reserved, to shew us the worth of that minister who should make the Devil laugh ! This last great sacerdotal experiment is now tried. Let us enquire, however, whether it is not, as Cowper says, most

‘ Pitiful
To court a grin, when you should woo a soul ;
To break a jest, when pity should inspir
Pathetic exhortation ; and to address
The skittish faucy, with facetious tales,
When sent with God’s commission to the heart !’

[A paragraph is here omitted *solely* because the particulars mentioned concerning Mr. Hill are erroneous.]

“ Whether the motives which have induced Mr. Hill to persist in his secession from the establishment were perfectly conscientious, or whether, on the other hand, he was at all decided by the affectation of singularity and the ambition of notoriety, are questions which must rest with himself. He was once found, by the late Cornelius Winter, in the situation of ‘ a distressed gentleman ;’ and was then considered as suffering for the cause which he espoused.

“ I do not deem it essential to ascertain exactly when the Rev. Rowland Hill first erected his religious ‘ Round House,’ as his place of worship has been not unaptly called ; nor do I think it at all necessary to exhibit, were it in my power to procure one, an intelligible schedule of its ticketted seats. Speculation is not the business of the present enquiry. I imagine, however, that Surrey Chapel will not always continue so profitable as it may hitherto have proved. Novelty ceases to attract its crowds to this evangelical octagon ; and the popular influence of its founder, for whom there will not soon

be found an adequate substitute, is now rapidly declining. Like the late Mr. Newton, there is reason to apprehend that Mr. Hill may outpreach, if not also outlive himself! He published a sermon on the occasion of laying the first stone of the chapel of which he has so long been the prop; but from which, if there be truth in what is told, he is the last to derive any great advantage in a pecuniary point of view. Instead of leading others, as he ought to have done, he, it is said, has been led by others. The ape may fail to make use of the cat's paw.

"Santiloquence, the eloquence of the Pulpit, is of so little value in the judgment of this celebrated preacher, that it is not to be supposed he will pay the least degree of attention to any observations of mine on his oratorical qualifications. What I shall remark, therefore, can only benefit those who may wish to avoid the errors which so palpably characterize his fashion of preaching. His very faults have raised him friends, and his extravagancies found imitators. Of the style of singing early adopted, and still practised, in his chapel, it must with justice be asserted, in the versification of Pope, that

'The blessing thrills through all the labouring throng;
And heaven is won by—violence of song!'

Perhaps it is owing to this 'violence of song,' as the poet by anticipation described it, that Mr. Hill is so sensibly agitated when he enters his pulpit, and first surveys, in all directions, his surrounding congregation; frequently demonstrating, during this period, by alternate movements of the hand or arm, how properly his mind is then engaged in imploring blessings on the people! Notwithstanding this display of pious precision, there is, in this preacher, a negligence degenerating into slovenliness. Decorum really becomes the pulpit. It is painful, it is worse than painful, to see a divine, so placed, turn his back on his hearers, the instant he has finished his prayer; then having pulled his robes into order, loll upon his cushion, rub his face, feel his mouth, or pick his nose.

“Language must not hope to picture the look with which Mr. Hill first takes the pulpit. So vacantly risible is the expression of his countenance, there is such idiotic shrewdness in it, that to stifle laughter, which yet must be done, when one contemplates his face, is an effort almost too great to bear. Strange as is this trait in him, I leave the truth of it to those who have seen and heard him.

“Mr. Hill gives his text very indistinctly, and almost inaudibly. The character of his discourses is generally known: sameness in substance, incoherent in arrangement, whimsical in illustration, commonly colloquial in language, and abounding in strange flights of fancy, and apt but humourous stories. He absolutely labours for his metaphors; and in his zeal to lower himself to what he conceives to be the ‘aptitude or capability of his audience,’ he constantly mistakes vulgarity for simplicity. Let us try, from memory, some of those passages by which Mr. Hill’s Sermons are distinguished.

“Some preachers,” he lately significantly observed to his hearers, “had need be Doctors of Divinity in order to carry their nonsense down!” He shortly after declared, however, by way of concession to, or compromise with other clergymen, “I don’t blame those who must preach bad sermons, if they read good ones; for it is certainly better to read good ones of other people’s than to preach bad ones of their own.” He then, by no unnatural transition, began to descant on Village Preaching; and preferred for ‘this evangelical work,’ men with ‘less learning in their heads than grace in their hearts,’ to all the dignified divines in existence. I should only spoil his description of these Village Missionaries, whose labours are so piously seconded by the ‘money dug,’ to record Mr. Hill’s strong simile for sacred begging ‘from the London mines,’ were it attempted by me to retrace it on paper. When other giddy fellows are setting out in their whiskeys, sabbath after sabbath, then it is that these simple persons, the Village Missionaries of the London Itinerant Society, start for ‘the evangelizing work;’ and as Mr. Hill remarked, ‘what a

comfortable employment it is for young men!’ While others are spending money, these are saving it; and while others are whiskeying along the broad way that leadeth to destruction, these are sociably trotting, two by two, the narrow path that must inevitably lead to blessedness! So, at least, Mr. Hill assures us. Is he not a most admirable recruiting-serjeant in the service of his evangelical church-militant?

“Strenuously as he objects to the ‘sounding brass’ or ‘tinkling cymbal’ of oratory, it is here that himself can be really oratorical. Not only does he exert himself in mouthing the sounding brass, but like those profane wenches who play the triangle through our streets, most aptly can he imitate, by the dextrous motion of his fingers, the jingle of the tinkling-cymbal. Such is, nevertheless, his sovereign contempt, his sublime detestation of either ‘the sounding-brass’ or tinkling-cymbal, and so fearfully does he refrain from the judicious admixture of both, that it is by no means easy to pronounce to what genus of eloquence his preaching belongs.

“Literature is with him as his eloquence. ‘I am sure,’ he will say, ‘that what they call composition, and the rest of it, does more harm than good.’ Since he thus disclaims all literary circumspection, it is not so astonishing, as otherwise it would be, to hear him, while striving to familiarize the mysteries of religion, talk of ‘depths that would drown a camel,’ with ‘rivulets, running to the main river, which a lamb might wade with safety.’ And adding, with the most marvellous expression of countenance, ‘how surprising does the Bible explain these matters! what a wonderful book is the Bible.’

“Mr. Hill is not quite what once he was. His voice, firmly loud, at one time, to an extreme, is now (1809) either so broken as to render his enunciation indistinct, or so tremulous as to be with difficulty audible, or when high, so painfully powerful as to resemble hooting. Still, however, if as another reverend gentleman says, ‘no one is fit for a spiritual shepherd who does not possess a good whistle to whistle the sheep

into the fold ;' if such be the case, then is Mr. Hill, clearly enough, in point of 'whistle' or lungs, so far qualified to execute the laborious duties of the spiritual sheepfold. This makes but half his worth. Following the example of the regal shepherd, Mr. Hill, it seems, bears about with him 'his sling;' whence, according to the gentleman above referred to (the Rev. Mr. Blake) the true spiritual shepherd must, as the champion of Goliath once did, be engaged in 'flinging stones' at those who are not of his flock. Now, is not this true of Mr. Hill? Incessantly is he employed in thus 'flinging stones;' or, plainly speaking, in scaring and routing sinners; without heeding, perhaps, that hearts are not equally obdurate, but that, if many are to be assailed only by terror, there are numbers who must be allured chiefly by mercy. Moses may denounce and deter, but it is for Jesus to conciliate and convert!

"It is to be wished that Mr. Hill's religious allegiance was as honourable to him as his political loyalty; that he revered the church, as he respects the state. Catholicism should be universal. Let the abuse of our spiritual dignitaries, therefore, be immediately transferred from Surrey Chapel, where it does not tell, to Providence Chapel, where it is still relished. Be it the sole business of the illiterate and illiberal, of the Huntingtons or Cobbetts of the day, to be employed in reviling those qualities and dignities to which they may not worthily aspire.

"Mr. Hill shall have his praise. Credit let him take for the species of talent by which he is known in the pulpit. He has the happy knack, if such it is, of immediately arresting the attention of the commonalty, and obtaining their attention. Naturally eccentric, he is unequalled in the excitation of religious merriment. Perhaps he is the only living preacher, and this he has done, who could make the people smile during a funeral sermon. His stories are uniformly amusing: his jokes are jokes of the heart.

"Proper things, however, in proper places. Is it now too

late to dissuade Mr. Hill from extravagantly pursuing a system of preaching, of which the beneficial effects are so extremely doubtful? Cannot he be familiar without being funny; or must illustration necessarily be irreverential? What gratification can he find in being considered as the great head of story-telling and stamping preachers; of evangelical eccentrics; of mountebank pulpiteers? His example has wrought incalculable ill. It is not easy to say how many an S. S. or an M. G. we owe to him; men who, either as to goodness or talents, are not worthy of being associated with Mr. Hill even as 'the hewers of wood and drawers of water' to the temple of our religion.

"While it is incumbent on me not to conceal the defects of Mr. Hill, let his merits obtain honourable mention. If he did not evince more than ordinary talents, he would not have called forth the strictures I have felt it necessary to make.

"He possesses a strong reasoning mind. He readily seizes the prominent bearings of his subject, fixes them in the clearest point of view, and is easily apprehended by his auditory. His addresses, as they seem to flow from the fervour of feeling, often strongly affect the feelings of those to whom they are directed; and the very tremulousness of his undertones contributes, at times, to solemnize the minds of the people. His action, though too frequently ludicrously distorted, is, when occasionally he places his hand on the sconces of the pulpit, really graceful and highly dignified.

"Evangelical ministers, it should seem, are sometimes rather earthly minded. What other feeling than that of fallible vanity, the poor love of poor fame, induced Mr. Hill to tolerate, and patronize too, prints of his house, in which he is drawn as setting out from home, fully robed, while a medallion profile of him appears suspended amidst the clouds? I have done. Charity now urges me to refrain from severely animadverting, as I might, on Mr. Hill's reiterated invectives against regular clergymen, and his ill-dissembled confidence in his own preaching.

“Mr. Hill’s publications are multitudinous enough. He has written more than I have had time to read: and some of which they say he would not write now. I will not revive his regrets by pointing out their source.”

FROM MR. JAY’S FUNERAL SERMON.

TEXT, Zech. xi. 2—“*Howl, fir-tree, for the Cedar is fallen.*”

* * * “I have known the deceased forty-seven years and have annually aided him forty-six years within these walls, (Surrey Chapel.) During all that eventful period, I have had free access to him in private, and multiplied opportunities to judge of him in public. Indeed never was there a man more open to observation, and never was there a man more qualified to bear it; for he had all the transparency of glass without the brittleness. I have, therefore, one happy advantage on this occasion. My brethren in the ministry well know how embarrassed we sometimes are in our funeral exercises, between the wishes and expectations of friends, and the convictions of our own consciences; hence, some have declined such engagements altogether. But there is nothing this morning for the preacher to deny or palliate, or excuse, or explain—the infirmities inseparable from sanctified humanity while here, being excepted.

“And this is one of his highest distinctions, that he passed through life with unblemished reputation, and left a character without a single stain. Yet the trial of his principles was unusually long; for he commenced his religious course early; and had, when he finished it, nearly entered his ninetieth year. And it was severe as well as lengthened. He was called to endure a great variety of probations, and especially the perils arising from popular applause, concerning which the wisest of men long ago remarked, ‘as the fining-pot for silver

and the furnace for gold, so is a man to his praise.' The popularity of this exalted character was not comparative or transient: it was full at first and it continued to the last. Whenever his name was announced for preaching, the place was always crowded, and a multitude hung upon his lips. Persons may differ in their views of the worth of popularity: but it can never be overrated as an instrument of usefulness: and they may differ in their opinion of the sources of popularity; but mere novelty and peculiarity will never fully account for a popularity that flourished much more than half a century without decay. Since he emerged into public notice, how many wonderful men (as the phrase is) have been cried up, of whom, after a time, we have heard nothing. They rose suddenly with a rush, and crackled, and sparkled downward, and expired, and paper and stick were only left on the ground. But the departed was not a sky-rocket—his path was 'like the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' He was not a meteor—he resembled 'the sun when he goeth forth in his strength.' As there was no declension in his acceptance, so neither was there any cooling in his zeal. His zeal was like the fire on the Jewish altar, kindled by the breath of Heaven, and which never went out. He loved his Master—he loved his work. The love of Christ constrained him to live not to himself, but to him that died for him and rose again. Preaching was his very element and delight: and, as he wished, so it was; his work and his life nearly closed together. He was from the beginning a peculiar individual, a perfectly original character; and there are cases that must not be tried by abstract principles, or general rules, but by their own laws and circumstances, and which are so singular and rare as that there is no probability of their being established as precedents or examples. But from Mr. Hill's determination [not to be fettered by the ecclesiastical statutes of the established church] arose much of the complexion of his character, and we are persuaded of his usefulness too. For now feeling himself free from every

trammel, and at full liberty to follow his convictions, he went forth preaching everywhere, the Lord working with him.

“ In general the Lord takes his people and ministers from the humble and middle walks of life ; but Mr. Hill was a man of family, ancient and respectable ; and it is not a little surprising how many of the household, for it was large, have been distinguished for genuine piety. Sir Richard Hill, his elder brother, was much known by several publications, not only in favour of the doctrines he held, but in promotion of brotherly love and candour, especially between Churchmen and Dissenters, who ‘ held the head.’ He furnished me with some instances of his brother’s early wit and fervour, which time will not allow me to relate. But the religion thus commenced was not a form of godliness, but the power thereof. It was a divinely vital principle, and from that hour he walked by faith, he went about doing good, and made the end of one good work the beginning of another. When we consider the journeys he took, the sermons he preached, the visits he paid to the sick and dying, how well may we apply to him the Saviour’s commendation, ‘ Thou hast laboured and hast not fainted :’ ‘ I know thy works, and the last to be more than the first.’

“ Under the divine blessing, a life of temperance and exertion, and cheerfulness, conduced to secure and perpetuate a high degree of health ; so that the deceased through life was scarcely ever laid aside from employment. Thus also he reached a fine old age, which it was delightful to look on. ‘ The days of our years,’ says Moses, ‘ are threescore years and ten ; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow.’ But here was more than the period, without the infirmities ; and at last nature was not racked with tormenting pain, nor the frame worn out with consuming disease ; but the good old patriarch grew a little drowsy towards the evening of a long and laborious day, and having served his generation, fell asleep, and was not, for God took him.”

EXTRACT FROM MR. GRIFFIN'S (OF PORTSEA) FUNERAL
SERMON.

TEXT, John v. 35—" *He was a burning and a shining light.*"

* * * "Mr. Hill was intended for the established church, with the hope that his talents and family connexions would raise him to some eminence in it. Such, however, was the ardour of his youth, and his love to the Redeemer, that he could not be restrained within the bounds of canonical rules. He had heard Mr. Whitefield in London, and his spirit caught the flame which burned in the bosom of that zealous and eloquent clergyman. He visited the prisons, and the houses of the afflicted and poor in Cambridge. Soon after, he preached at the Tabernacle and Tottenham Court Chapel, which were in connexion with Mr. Whitefield, and at other places, where he was followed by astonishing crowds of hearers, and great grace was upon many of them. His early consecration to the service of Christ was a great excellency in the character of Mr. Hill. He devoted the full strength of his mental and physical powers to Christ in his youth. His lively Christian affections—his flights of imagination—his sallies of wit—and the evident proofs of real piety which characterized his public addresses, united to gain him large throngs of listening hearers, almost wherever he went. He rose as a burning and a shining light, amidst deep and extensive spiritual and moral darkness. The light which he and others then diffused has shone far and bright in these lands since he rose in the Christian hemisphere. Very many pious young men have subsequently appeared both in the Establishment and among every denomination of Dissenters, who, though they have not displayed the brilliancy of Mr. Hill, as stars of the first magnitude, yet, as constellations, are the lights of the world, and the glory of the churches.

"The excellency of his ministry was manifested by his *power of description*. All the works of God and man—all the operations of mind—and all that we are taught respecting invisible

beings—were laid under requisition by his imagination to aid him in the descriptive part of his preaching. Sin was often depicted, in all its odious and offensive qualities. The deep depravity of the human heart and life was so exhibited as to cause many a weeping penitent, like Job, to say, ‘I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.’ The soul of man was laid open by him with all its secret imagery, and shown to the sinner in the full blaze of light, till he fell prostrate before the throne of God, saying, ‘Woe is me, for I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips.’ ‘God be merciful to me a sinner.’ His description of the doctrines of the gospel was rendered familiar to the plainest understanding, both by the terms which he employed, and the comparisons he made. The doctrines of regeneration by grace—justification by faith—adoption—sanctification, &c. were presented through a lucid medium, and made intelligible to attentive hearers.

“Mr. Hill’s preaching was sometimes very powerful in argument. In the year 1792, I was at Bristol tabernacle, when I had an opportunity of hearing him during a part of four sabbaths; at that time, he was strongly excited, in consequence of some recent publications by Dr. Priestley. He seemed to throw the whole force of his mind into a course of arguments in defence of the divinity and atonement of Christ, which I then felt to be lucid, cogent, and conclusive. I refer for confirmation of these remarks to his *Village Dialogues*, Nos. 19, 20, entitled, “*Socinianism Unmasked*,” which, though they partake of his characteristic style of humour and sarcasm, yet display a concatenation of judicious arguments, convincing to the sceptic, and confirming to the believer. His appeals to the conscience were irresistible, like a sharp two-edged sword; many stout-hearted sinners were wounded to the quick, and like the woman of Samaria said to their friends and neighbours, “Come and see a man that told me all things that ever

I did.' His appeals pierced the hearts even of those whose consciences were seared as with a hot iron.

"His ministry was powerfully persuasive. Often did he preach from, and frequently cite the language of Paul, 'We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that which he hath done, whether it be good or bad.' 'Knowing therefore the terrors of the Lord we *persuade* men.' When his spirit was under the unction of the Spirit of God, and his mind in a good frame for preaching, he poured forth the affections of his heart in persuasive strains of expostulation and reasoning with the sinner, till vast multitudes were melted into tears of godly sorrow for sin, while others were excited to the most lively affection to Christ, and to spiritual joys arising from the hope that God was reconciled unto them, and felt the internal evidence of their reconciliation.

"Another excellency of Mr. Hill's character consisted in the clear, judicious, and evangelical *sentiments* which emanated from his lips; and in this view he was a burning and shining light. He borrowed all his rays from the Sun in the centre of the Christian system. In his preaching Christ was all and in all. On the Lord's day, March 31, 1833, he preached from that fine passage, 1 Cor. ii. 7, 8, 'We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,' &c. &c. This passage expressed with such majesty of style, and conveying such sublime thoughts, admirably suited the expansive and elevated mind of Mr. Hill. His spirit could soar like the eagle, and look the sun in its face, while he left others, as of the lower species of the feathered tribe, in the regions far below him, to chatter like the crane or the swallow, strangers to the powers by which he could ascend to heights so much above them. There are those who speak and write about Mr. Hill's defects, and who are no more capable of following him in his metaphysical thoughts and sublime ideas of God and his works, than a child is capacitated to converse with an archangel. I pity them for their weakness and folly in striving to hide their superiors by a cloud of their

own forming, that their smaller light may appear to be the brighter. (!!)

“ His devotional services peculiarly displayed the religious frame of his spirit. His prayers in the family were extemporary, and always short; as he considered tedious domestic worship to be more injurious than profitable, to those parts of the family who were not engaged in speaking. His petitions and thanksgivings generally embraced the occurrences of the day, whether domestic, social, or national, and which were referred to in laconic phraseology, and with much unction and fervency. Though he was accustomed to use the prescribed forms of the Church, with which he was greatly delighted, his prayer before and after sermon, was generally short, as all the principal subjects had been embraced in the written service. He, therefore, seldom attempted to follow any fixed method of leading his own devotions or those of the congregation, by exciting them to adoration, invocation, confession, petition, pleading, and thanksgiving; a method recommended by some of our best and greatest divines. Though Mr. Hill did not follow any of these set rules, he was far from despising such a classification of thoughts as might best aid the devotions of the minister and the hearers. There was an excursiveness in his style of extemporary public prayers; yet was there often a sublimity of thought and expression in them which powerfully excited a devotional spirit in the minds of his people. He was almost constantly requested at public meetings, when he did not preach, to take this part of the service; and he scarcely ever performed it, without leaving a very deep impression on the minds of his auditory, of the reality of the religion which characterized his heart and conduct. Judging from what I have seen and heard of Mr. Hill, I believe that he was a spiritually minded man, a man of much ejaculatory communion with God. The orbit in which he moved was near the sun of righteousness, from which he received his light and vital heat, and to whom he ascribed all the glory of what was in him, or done by him. His religious character

was the source of every other excellency, and therefore justifies us in saying, 'He was a burning and shining light.'"

EXTRACT FROM A MEMOIR OF MR. HILL, IN THE EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE, for July 1833, BY MR. JACKSON of Stockwell.

"Mr. Hill, in his doctrinal sentiments was decidedly a Calvinist, but he was opposed to what is called Hyper-Calvinism; and the writer once heard him preach an ingenious and well sustained discourse on 'The Antinomianism of Arminianism, and the Arminianism of Antinomianism.' Perhaps few men have understood, better than he did, the questions at issue between Theologians. Socinianism and Antinomianism he abhorred; and he used to say, in his facetious manner, that in the one case the devil appeared dressed up like a miller, and in the other like a chimney-sweeper. Justification by the righteousness of Christ, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, were the themes upon which he delighted to dwell, and upon which he was always at home.

"He was one of the founders of the London Missionary Society, and its firm and steady friend to the end of his days. For this noble cause he travelled more than 10,000 miles gratuitously, frequently contributing towards his travelling expences. The writer has had the honour and happiness to accompany him in most of those labours of love; and many a scene has he witnessed that never can be effaced from his memory. At Leeds, in the Cloth Hall (an open quadrangle) he saw, on one occasion, 10,000 people hanging on his lips with the deepest interest; he has seen the Theatre at Sheffield opened to receive him, and crowded to excess, when the largest dissenting place of worship in the town, the Wesleyan Chapel, was denied to him, though he was pleading the cause of the perishing heathen. In other parts he has witnessed equal proofs of his popularity, and never can he forget the

scene at Cardigan, where immense multitudes were assembled to enjoy the missionary festival. The preacher stood on a platform which was elevated for the occasion, preaching alternately in Welsh and in English; a large table was spread in the valley below, on which were placed the memorials of a Saviour's dying love; around it sat the men on the turf, behind them the women who were communicants, seated on benches; and behind these stood the spectators; the mountains appearing in the distance, the sun declining, the moon rising towards the close of day; the solemn addresses, the echo of the spiritual songs which resounded between the hills, the evident tokens of the divine presence, the holy love and harmony which prevailed—presented a scene no language can describe; it was indeed the gate of heaven.

“Another scene, which occurred in one of Mr. Hill's missionary tours, must not be omitted. It took place in Cornwall, at a spot called the Pit, near Redruth, where a kind of amphitheatre is formed by the falling in of a mine, which some liberal friends among the Wesleyans have made very convenient for public meetings in the open air. Here the multitude assembled, and the spectacle was quite unique; the shops in the town were shut, business was suspended, and men, women, and children, to the amount of about 4,000, hastened to the spot where ‘Sir Rowland,’ as they called him, was to preach. There you might have seen carts, waggons, gigs, post-chaises, horses, donkies, chairs, tables, forms, &c. all in requisition; and a goodly band of the best singers in the adjacent country were conveniently placed among the crowd, who conducted that part of the service with great propriety; while the effect of the singing, the energy of the preacher, and the attention of the people, were truly solemn: and we could not forbear indulging the hope, that whilst he was pleading the cause of the heathen in distant lands, some sinners on the spot were ‘pricked to the heart.’

“The time and attention of Mr. Hill, in his latter days, were much devoted to the rising town of Leamington, in

Warwickshire. He saw, in the rapidly increasing population of that place, a wide sphere for usefulness, and he contributed near £2,000 to the cause of God, there, in the purchase of the chapel and burial ground in Mill Street, and in the erection and furnishing a dwelling house for the resident minister; the whole of which he has left in the hands of trustees, with instructions that the Liturgy of the Church of England shall be read there, to meet the views of those who prefer this mode of worship.

“ His candour was well known; ‘ Grace be with all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity,’ was his motto, hence he enjoyed the friendship of good men of every denomination. ‘ On Monday before his death, he told the writer, that he did not sit in judgment upon other men, though some narrow-minded bigots, churchmen and dissenters, had taken upon them to judge of his motives. He added, that upon a review of his public life, and on the near prospect of eternity, if his time were to come over again, he would pursue exactly the same course which he had done. He spoke of himself in terms of the greatest humility, and proceeded to express his wishes as to the place of his sepulture, when with great composure he said, ‘ If it had pleased God to have taken me to himself while I was at Wotton, I should have liked to have been buried with Mrs. Hill; but as my heavenly Father has otherwise determined, I would rather be buried in Surrey Chapel, where I have preached for half a century, than have my body carried so many miles after my death.’ After this conversation I said to him, ‘ Well, Sir, it is probable we shall soon lose you; but our loss will be your gain; you are going to be with Jesus and see him as he is;’ when he replied with great emphasis, ‘ Yes, and I shall be like him, that is the crowning point.’

“ Thus lived and died the Rev. Rowland Hill; and who is there that does not exclaim, ‘ Let my last end be like his?’ He was not a perfect character; there are spots in the sun. He was naturally haughty; his firmness sometimes degene-

rated into obstinacy; he found it difficult to forgive an injury; he was sometimes hasty and indiscriminate in his attachments, which occasionally involved him in difficulties: but he was deeply sensible of his defects; and if at any time he had been overtaken in a fault, the writer has been affected to see him weeping bitterly, and in the most humiliating terms imploring forgiveness through a Saviour's blood."

EXTRACT FROM THE EVANGELICAL REGISTER, MAY, 1833.

"The character, both mental and spiritual, of Rowland Hill was of no common order; and the space he filled in the church of God will perhaps rarely, if ever, be occupied again by any individual minister. His sermons, from the beginning to the end, were rich with evangelical truth—it was Jesus Christ, and him crucified. He never, though possessing a strong imagination and great intensity of feeling, was led astray by the numerous errors which have proved so injurious to many professors during his long ministration. The Arminian peculiarities, though recommended by Wesley, and the Antinomian delusions, though advocated by many, as well as Socinian heresy, were alike rejected by Mr. Hill. His favourite subject was sanctification, on which he would discourse with an elegance, for a short time, truly sublime and pathetic. The writer thinks he witnesses him now, as in the vigour of manhood, rising in his figure and his voice into one of those bursts of impassioned declamation, on the purity of God, which often made the very hair to tingle, and the place to appear as holy ground. Yet sanctification in his hands, was not an abstract view of a part, but a warm and living exhibition of the *whole* of the Gospel; it included the whole of the apostolic assertion: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren."

It was sanctification by faith, and brought into immediate sight the cross of Christ, the blood which cleanseth us from all sin. Those who observed his discourses attentively could perceive a degree of unity amidst all his excursions—he had *one* thought on which it might be seen most other thoughts had a bearing, and his object was to drive this home. His preaching was rather aphoristic than orderly and consequential: he aimed at point and impression, knowing that if he could carry the heart, the judgment would be taken also; and his remarks were often so pithy and full, so luminous and warm, that the hearer who was impressed, felt that it was with the force of that truth which enlightened his understanding.”

FROM THE EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE OF MAY, 1833.

Servant of God, farewell!
 Thine earthly course is run;
 We grieve to hear thy knell,
 But thou hast vict'ry won.

Toilsome and long thy strife
 With Satan and with sins;
 Extended was thy life,
 But now thy rest begins.

Thousands, transported, hung
 On those attractive strains,
 Which issued from thy tongue
 Like fertilizing rains.

The sinner, struck with awe,
 Thy faithful warnings heard,
 When, from the fiery law,
 Thou gav'st the solemn word.

The mourning, contrite soul,
 Thy gentle accents found
 Could make the riven whole,
 And staunch the bleeding wound.

Jesus was all thy theme
 From youth to rev'rend age;
 His name, the sunlight beam
 That rested on thy page.

When "village scenes" pourtrayed,
 Thy lively pencil drew,
 Jesus was still displayed
 To our admiring-view.

And love to him began,
 Just in thy manhood's prime,
 The missionary plan:
 That glory of our time

But now thy lips are cold,
 And silent is thy tongue,
 The tomb thine ashes hold—
 Thy last sad requiem's sung.

And art thou silent now?—
 No list'ning throng around
 No! yonder angels bow,
 And gath'ring saints surround.

Sweet are the notes they raise,
 Responsive every string,
 While they assist *thy* praise,
 And teach *thee* how to sing.

Jesus is *still* thy theme,
 And his surpassing love,
 Who could such worms redeem,
 And raise to joys above.

Servant of God, farewell
 The vision is too bright,—
 As yet, we cannot dwell
 With saints in realms of light.

FROM THE EVANGELICAL REGISTER OF MAY, 1833.

Alas! the sovereign mandate calls away
 The Christian veteran from the field below;
 Yet crown'd with honours of a long-fought day,
 That few beside are favour'd here to know.

Through good and ill report he took his course,
 Reckless of scorn and bigotry severe,
 Still onward press'd to preach a Saviour's cross,
 While friends admire, and even foes revere

So oft, in early days, he led the field
Against sectarian holds—those seats of pride;
And urg'd the sons of bigotry to yield—
Then spoke of Charity, the Christian's guide.

By nature form'd to shield him from the darts
Of secret hate or open-handed fight;
How few there were of vile or honest hearts
That e'er could wage the war with equal might

In manners pure, and philanthropic too,
Of undisputed piety was he;
And though eccentric both to friend and foe—
He sought to show how Christians should agree.

With heart sincere, with zeal-enkindled breast,
How oft was he the heathen's dauntless friend!
The claims of millions urg'd with holy zest,
And long'd for Jesus' kingdom to extend.

To British youth, what sage advice he gave,
And 'midst their congregated thousands stood;
While from their teachers would he zealous crave,
Their ceaseless offerings for the children's good.

Benevolent in heart—with liberal hand,
At home—abroad, he preach'd with pure delight;
And who shall here describe the holy band
Call'd through his labours to the realms of light.

O might the Muse but echo half the praise
Of one, still dear, whose spirit dwells above!
That hails this aged saint in sacred lays,
“ Father in Christ! through Everlasting Love!”

The God of Grace his blessings richly shed,
And verified his promise on record—
To hoary hairs I'll be thy God, he said,
Then call'd his servant HILL to his reward.

Farewell on earth, thou aged warrior, rest
From all thy care, and zeal, and labours here,
Before the throne of God supremely blest,
To sing of grace divine that brought thee there.

And when the solemn trump shall shake the skies
To wake the slumb'ring saints from death's domain,
Thy form, committed now to dust, shall rise
Immortal, and with Christ triumphant reign.

FROM THE "PATRIOT" NEWSPAPER OF MAY, 1833.

We heave not a sigh—not a tear we shed—
Nor lift we the voice of weeping,
As calmly we gaze on the face of the dead,
So soundly and sweetly sleeping :
For he breathed his last prayer on the tender breast
Of his Master and Lord reclining ;
His death was the death of the holy and blest,
And his works are still brightly shining.

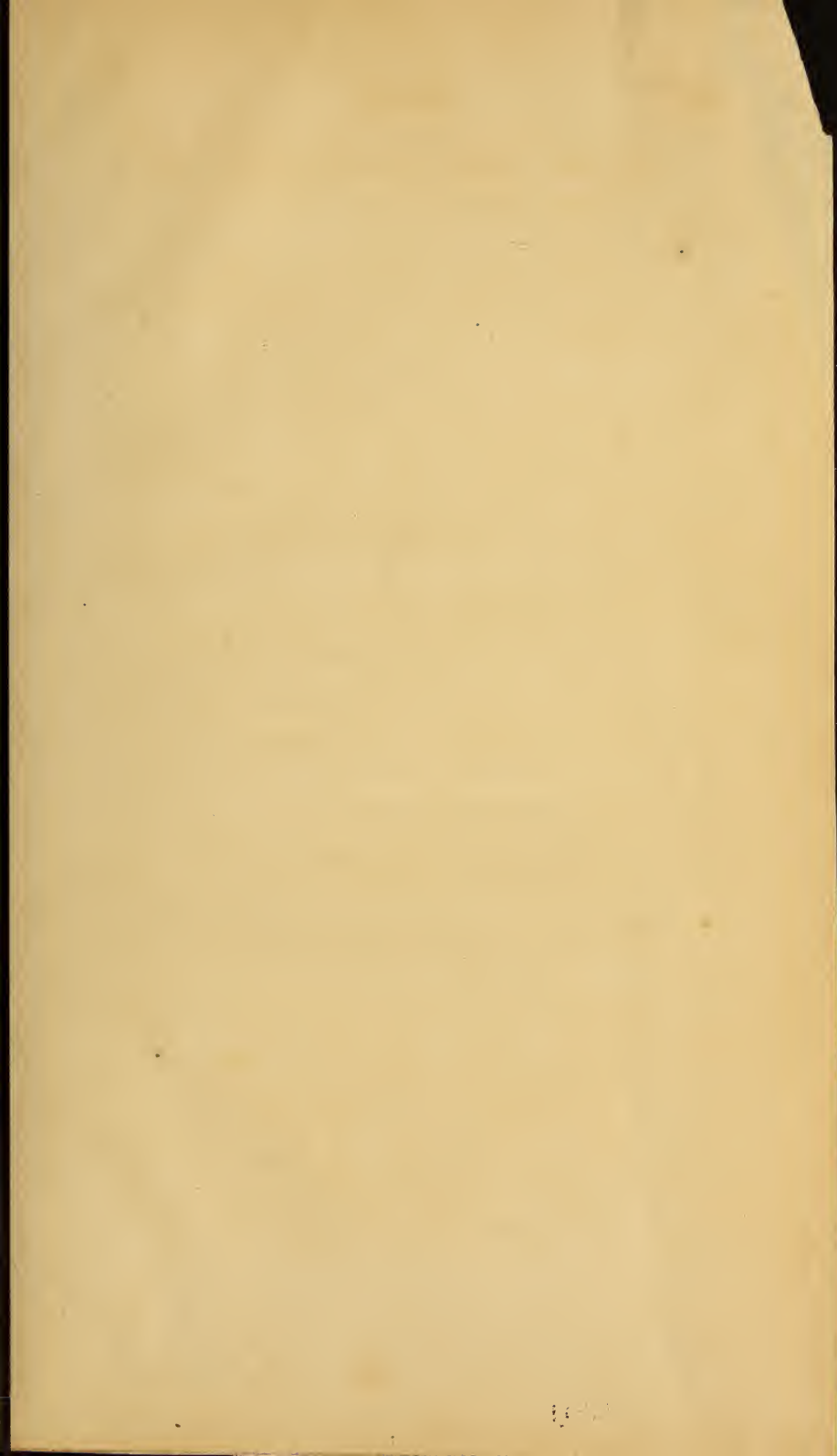
We crowd to his tomb; yet we dare not laud
His name in profane oration ;
But we consecrate it an altar to God,
And offer no vain oblation :
For we sing the grace, that in vessels of earth,
Deposits the heavenly treasure ;
Wide o'er the world's waste to distribute its worth
Unmix'd, and unbounded in measure.

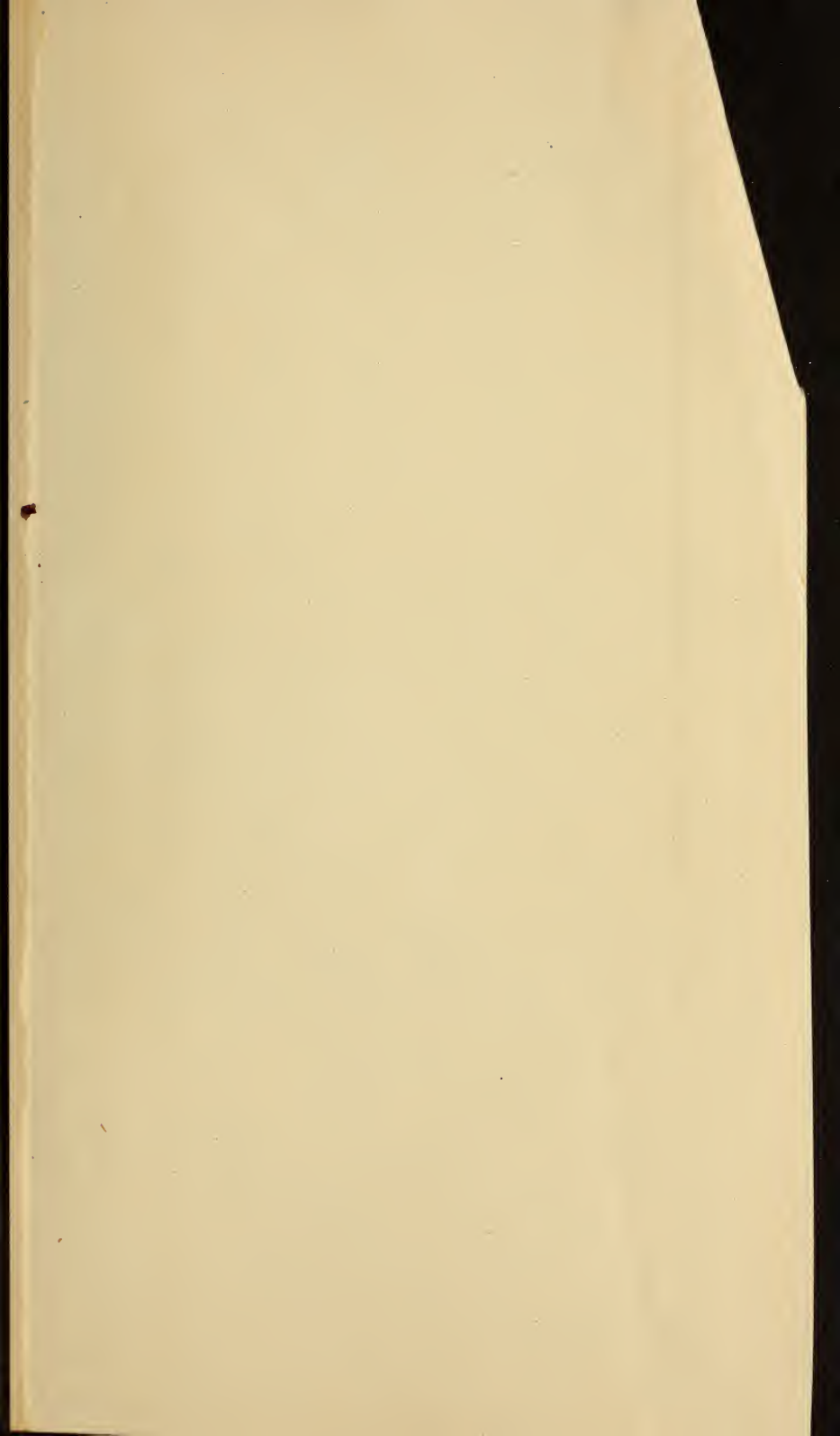
He, swift as the light, a herald from heaven,
The message of peace imparted
To rebels, whose hearts with despair had been riven ,
And balm, to the broken-hearted.
And the wanderer's feet from the perilous maze
Of error to righteousness turning,
He seemed like a beacon, with its signal blaze,
In a dark world vividly burning.

A warrior he, of the blood-stained cross,
The powers of darkness spoiling ;
Repulsing their ranks, with discomfiture, loss,
And their hellish malice foiling ;
He fought the good fight to the moment of death,
A veteran war-worn and hoary ;
Resigning the sword for the conqueror's wreath,
And palm of unperishing glory.

The fulness of grief from their eyes may flow,
Who mourn—unavailing sorrow!—
For souls that have sunk in a dark night of woe,
Nor hoped for a brighter morrow :
But rejoicing in hope, and catching the song
Through heaven's high arches ringing,
We re-echo the strains of the sainted throng
Amongst whom our father is singing.

[END OF THE MEMOIRS.]

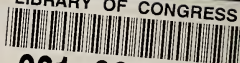








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